

# Christian Order

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*Peter Wilders*

OUR LADY'S WELL

*William Gillett & the Editor*

THE REAL PRESENCE AND  
PLACEMENT OF THE TABERNACLE

*Monica Migliorino*

FEMINISM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

*John W. Mole, O.M.I.*

WANTED : A FAIR EXCHANGE

*The Editor*

## **MY BEST THANKS**

to those who have renewed their subscriptions with such generosity during the past months. May I ask the few who have not yet done so to renew without delay. This is very necessary now to keep our records straight.

— *Paul Crane, S.J.*

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## Wanted : a Fair Exchange

THE EDITOR

ONE thought out of many that have been in my mind in the years since the Council, appeared to me to receive particular confirmation from the little I was able to glean from the goings-on during the Synod on the Laity in the concluding months of the year that has just gone by.

What I refer to is the impression, surfacing strongly from time to time that what we used to call Catholic Action was coming increasingly to be seen in terms of the clericalization of the laity. The pressure was on them, in all sorts of ways, to find their place in the life of the Church in the sacristy; whereas the priest, in his turn, was pressurized to see and seek the goal of his priestly existence in the marketplace. An exact reverse of what should be; an unwarranted exchange, which has produced results that can be described as little short of disastrous. I say this because it appears to me that the net consequence of this exchange has been that what impact there was of Catholic Social Principle — and it was not small — on the public life of this country has been largely lost. From this no-one has gained. Not only has much been lost, but we have been left with a void, which contemporary secularized doing, urged so strongly these days on the laity, has been totally unable to fill. This, precisely because it is secularized. Devoid of principle, it has served only to widen the void, which pressurized the retreat



of the laity into the sacristy set off in the first place and, indeed, continues to set off. By contrast, the priest, heading for the market-place, immersing himself in the secular on a basis of what he has been led to think of as the pursuit of "social justice", and with just about no knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching in his head, is turning — at the very least and probably without realizing it himself — into not much more than one of the many do-gooders, who spend their time these days stirring the humanitarian pot.

We are left, then, with a picture that is both contradictory and tragic — of the laity, both men and women, being pushed to participate in what I would call the "sacristy-work" of an increasingly secularized Church whose clergy and Religious are no longer committed to its essentially supernatural task — the salvation of souls — because of their dedication to secularist humanitarian pursuits. In consequence, the Church and the World are both getting stick; the Church is being shredded by the secular, whilst the World remains largely uninfluenced by the supernatural, which clergy and Religious are increasingly incapable and, I am afraid, unwilling to give it.

The call, then, must be for a return to basics; a fair and true exchange in place of that which is robbing both the Church and the World of so much. For the laity this means Catholic Action — if I may so call it — envisaged essentially as an *attitude* at their work, as distinct from *an extra added to it*; an attitude seen necessarily as something to be nourished by prayer and the Sacraments. For the priest, the supernatural must be seen as his essential concern, with work in the temporal and social spheres never regarded as an end in itself; but recognized always as *ancillary* to his essential and supernatural task, which is that of the salvation of the souls of his people. This is the partnership between priest and laity which must be reformed if the Faith is to endure. Cutting out the contemporary talk — about structures, committees, commissions and all the rest of it — we must get down to this reforging right away. We are suffering at the moment from a bogus exchange between clergy and laity. In consequence, both Church and World are being robbed. What we must reintroduce between these two is a fair exchange. That, please remember, is no robbery.

This second article represents the second half of Father John Mole's remarkable Address on "Feminism in the Catholic Church". It is commended, along with the already published first half of Father Mole's Address, very warmly to readers.

## Feminism in the Catholic Church: 2

JOHN W. MOLE, O.M.I.

### REPUDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH (OBJECTIVELY)

NOW let us turn to the *objective* aspect of the Christian Faith, which concerns its content of the truths of the Faith as contained in the Word of God. Canon 750 of the the new Code of Canon Law, speaks of faith in the objective sense: "Those things are to be believed by Word of God as it has been written or handed down by tradition . . . and which are at the same time proposed as divinely revealed by the Church . . . All are therefore bound to shun any contrary doctrines".

Here I think is the place to bring up a very pertinent question which I notice that WLFF members have put to their bishops more than once, both individually and in groups. The question may be framed in this way or that way but what it boils down to is this: Does that which calls itself "the woman's movement" but which is moving in the wrong direction as far as we are concerned and therefore should not claim to represent us . . . does this movement which has been operating for a decade or more in the Catholic Church of Canada and at its highest level, that is, in concert with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops or organisms thereof . . . does this woman's movement really shun doctrines contrary to the Catholic Faith? This woman's movement obtained from the General Assembly of the Canadian Bishops of Ottawa in 1984 the

adoption of its agenda in 12 points together with agreement on a set of discussion papers known as the Green Kit. For the past two years, the CCCB has been the publisher and distributor of this Green Kit. In the Introduction thereof we read: "The Administrative Board of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is pleased to present this kit of materials to Christian communities. The kit is designed to help people come to a deeper awareness of the role of women in the Church".

It consists of twelve lessons, some supplementary papers and a bibliography. The first lesson announces as its objective: "To become aware that the woman's movement here and elsewhere is a sign of the times".

### THE GREEN KIT: METHOD AND AGENDA

Let us note that the twelve lessons of the Green Kit are quite skeletal, and offer little in the way of content, little in the way of principles and teachings of the Catholic Faith which should guide any agenda proposed. The outlines of the lessons consist of method, rather than content, the method being that of group dynamics or as the Feminists call it, "consciousness raising". So how is content brought into the lessons of the Green Kit? In practice, those who have attended such lessons tell us that the agenda is brought in by "facilitators" (as they are called) versed in sources indicated in the bibliography. So that's the formula: in the lessons themselves you only have the methodology or "procedure"; the agenda is in the bibliography.

Now what do we find in the bibliography? Well we find such things as the Declaration of the Holy See on the question of the admission of women to the ministerial priesthood. And that is all to the good. But we also find a massive repudiation of the Holy See's position in books selected from a compact body of feminist writings which supplies doctrine and agenda to the movement as a whole.

The writings of any given Gnostic revolutionary movement have certain features which put them in a class apart from the main body of literature that has issued from the rational and wise discourse maintained in centres of civilization throughout all ages ever since writing was invented. Eric Voegelin has, in his remarkable book "The New



Science of Politics", established a typology of Gnostic movements. He gives special attention to the kind of literature they produce in order to indoctrinate their adherents. He takes the Puritan revolt in England as a typical case history because it was the first modern Gnostic movement to stage a successful revolt against the established order of the time, and also because it was analyzed very astutely by a contemporary and highly civilized observer, Hooker, the Anglican divine. Voegelin writes: "Hooker discerned that the Puritan position was not based on Scripture but was a 'cause' of a vastly different origin. It would use Scripture when passages torn out of context would support the cause, and for the rest it would blandly ignore Scripture as well as the traditions and rules of interpretation that had been developed by fifteen centuries of Christianity" (p. 138). Time does not permit me to go into all the criteria that Voegelin gives wherewith to show the nature of Gnostic revolutionary movements and the literature they produce. Regarding the latter, he makes this suggestion: "For the designation of this genus of Gnostic literature a technical term is needed. Since the study of Gnostic phenomena is too recent to have developed one, the Arabic term *koran* will have to do for the present" (p. 139). *The New Science of Politics*, was published in 1952. However, in 1965 appeared Jacques Ellul's critical analysis of the modern phenomenon of propaganda (his book bears the title *Propaganda*) and I think that this term, as defined by Ellul, may be the one which Voegelin was looking for. I cannot expatiate here on the theory of Ellul. Suffice to say that he deals with propaganda in the light of its being the manipulation of men's minds as contrasted with authentic communication or civilized, rational discourse.

Perhaps, to identify the literature which the "women's movement" in question seeks to propagate in the Catholic Church, it could be referred to as "The Woman's Bible". For, in a selection of feminist writings recommended by the Green Kit, and published under the title of *Womanspirit Rising*, much is made of a book called *The Woman's Bible* and which we gather is a sort of Genesis from which the body of feminist literature as a whole takes its inception. It was written in 1895 by Elizabeth Stanton. While it did



not have much effect in its own day, as soon as feminist writings began to accumulate and coalesce around 1970, it was recalled and acknowledged as having determined the style and content of the body of literature which has now been built up and which shows a cohesiveness comparable to that of the true Bible in its development of common themes.

## THE END OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

And the most fundamental theme which appears right from the beginning is the condemnation of the Jewish and Christian religions on the grounds that they centre on the worship of God who is revealed as Father and, in the case of the New Testament writings, of God who is revealed as having sent his only begotten Son to be the saviour of mankind. And that means abolishing the whole of Revelation and of our Faith as formulated in the Nicene Creed, it means abolishing the whole of scriptural commentaries and theological writings of the Fathers from the second to the tenth centuries and the whole of the magnificent development of systematic Theology since Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Middle Ages. That is the objective which this body of feminist literature puts right at the beginning of its agenda. The first sentence of the introduction of *Womanspirit Rising* reads: "Feminists have charged that Judaism and Christianity are sexist religions with a male God and traditions of male leadership that legitimate the superiority of men in family and society". And that theme is developed implacably and vehemently by practically all the contributors. It is true that they differentiate themselves into, on the one hand, reformists who would save what they regard as an inner core of biblical traditions which support women's liberation; and on the other, revolutionaries who maintain that Judaism and Christianity, being utterly vitiated by what they call "sexism", must be entirely destroyed. But even the so-called reformist aims are so revolutionary that they could not fail to be wholly destructive. And the abolition of what they call "sexism" does not mean tinkering with language and substituting "brothers and sisters" for "brethren" etc. It means destroying all reference to God the Father in the case of Judaism and all reference to God

the Son as well as to God the Father in the case of Christianity. That then is what "the paradigm shift" is ultimately about. The abolition of the exclusively male priesthood of Jesus Christ is only the tip of the iceberg. The hidden agenda is immensely greater.

And they refer to themselves as a messianic community sent to abolish the worship of God the Father and God the Son because these male images of God, they say, have not been objectively revealed but subjectively imagined. Let us remember that for them religion does not spring from the virtue of Faith. It springs rather from the knowledge, or the *gnosis* of experience. Their cardinal position is that salvation comes from this knowledge, not from Faith. What they call religion arises when people invent from their experience a set of myths, symbols and rituals, in order to interpret and inspire their existence. Hitherto, they claim, men have had the initiative in creating religions. Men have simply imaged what they want God to be like. Man is not made after the image and likeness of God. They consider that it is men who have made God to their own image and likeness. Finding from their experience that it is nice to dominate women, men, say the Feminists, have projected a male image for God, which will justify and institutionalize their subjection of women. Mary Daly, a principal contributor to the feminist pseudo-bible, refers to "the image of the Father God" as "spawned in the human imagination and sustained as plausible by patriarchy". This, she says, has made the "the oppression of women appear right and fitting" (WR, p. 54). Now, claim the feminists, the time has come to revolt and to use women's experience and woman's consciousness to project what they would like to see in a deity. So they project a Mother-Goddess, also referred to as Mother-Earth, and whom they also identify with the spirit of each woman, called the womanspirit. This is very explicit in witchcraft where worship of the Mother-Goddess is also self-worship. The goddess is within the witch. The goddess is the witch.

## ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF "THE PARADIGM SHIFT"

In short, the cry of "the paradigm shift" is: Down with God the Father and God the Son! The Holy Spirit is

retained but radically remodelled. The Spirit will no longer be One who confirms and clarifies the revelation and teachings of Jesus Christ but someone who brings new revelations which supplant or contradict those of Christ. Such was the Spirit of whom Montanus claimed to be the incarnation of the Holy Spirit, Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, who is sent by Our Lord, the Second Person, to *complete* his work, not destroy it. The principal criterion of the true Holy Spirit is that He testifies to the truth that Jesus Christ revealed, and to the Truth that Jesus Christ is, namely, the only begotten Son of God the Father.

## WITCHCRAFT

A moment ago, I alluded to the subject of witchcraft. It cannot be avoided because when one opens that Pandora's Box which is the bibliography of the Green Kit, witchcraft is one of the things which leaps into view. And it is not to be dismissed as beneath our notice. It is an integral component of the "womanspirit movement" at least for more radical activists who want to go all the way in their efforts to leave behind the subjection to men which they claim is imposed by the patriarchal religions of Judaism and Christianity.

Articles by two professed witches are included in the selection provided by the book, *Womanspirit Rising*. Further details about the pursuit of witchcraft in which these two are engaged can be learned from another author included in *Womanspirit Rising*, namely Naomi Goldenberg who teaches religion at the University of Ottawa, my own Alma Mater and from whom I obtained my degrees in philosophy and theology.

A book written by Naomi Goldenberg was published in 1979 under the title *Changing of the Gods* and with the subtitle "Feminism the End of Traditional Religions" (i.e. the end of Judaism and Christianity"). In it she gives instances of the cult practiced by the two witches in question. That is, she describes a coven by one of them in California with completely naked participants, men and women, and an assembly of half-naked women addressed by the other at Boston in a church rented for the purpose.



One gathers from such sources that witchcraft consists in trying to resuscitate that pagan cult of the Mother-Goddess which went into decline with the coming of Christianity. It is interesting to note that, according to another contributor to *Womanspirit Rising* by the name of Elaine Pagels, the Gnostic sects which infiltrated the Church in her early beginnings also attempted to resuscitate the cult of the Mother Goddess. Both the editors of *Womanspirit Rising* and Elaine Pagels deplore the lack of success of these attempts; that is, they deplore the fact that Christians of the second century put an end to them. It is highly significant that authors of *Womanspirit Rising* acknowledge the affinity which exists between the modern womanspirit movement and the ancient Gnostic sects, which sought to install the cult of the Mother Goddess as well as female priests in the early Christian Church.

The Mother Goddess worshipped in witchcraft today is apparently the projection of the spirit of each woman worshipper, her own individual womanspirit. There is also a horned God who is male, and who is born and dies at the beginning at the end of each lunar or liturgical year of witchcraft. It is the Mother Goddess who gives him birth. Subsequently he becomes her lover. The cover of Naomi Goldenberg's book has a picture of the Mother Goddess and the Horned God as winged beings. She is beautiful while he is a monster with five heads, each crowned with two horns, and a huge thick, coiling tail. He looks like the devil. However the editors of *Womanspirit Rising* say, regarding the articles of the two witches they have included, "They carefully distinguish their own witch traditions from Satanism or devil worship . . . Others in the spirituality movement eschew the term *witch* because it is so often misunderstood and simply call themselves participants in the womanspirit movement". On page 10 of their introduction, they give their own version of how the term "womanspirit" is to be used: "It is difficult to find a suitable term for those who reject biblical traditions. Some identify themselves as post-Christian, post-Jewish, pagan, witch, Goddess worshipper, or simply as members of the womanspirit movement". This is to say that a member of the womanspirit movement is one who rejects the inspired Word of God in the Old and New Testaments of our sacred scriptures.

## TOTAL REPUDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

To sum up, the protagonists of the "paradigm shift" are presently limiting their objective to women priests and, we should add, uncelibate priests. For one of the moments at the Washington Feminist assembly when the laughter and applause were loudest occurred when the self-professed feminist theologian, Richard McBrien, made a sarcastic attack on priestly celibacy. But nothing is said for the time being in public about the rest, the hidden agenda of the womanspirit movement. To get a more complete picture, one really has to consult the books and authors included in the bibliography of the Green Kit. And this can turn out to be a distasteful occupation, to say the least. In former times, the whole lot would have been on the Index of Forbidden Books which, as we can now appreciate, was far from being a senseless institution. But if there are good reasons for abolishing the Index, why in Heaven's name go to the opposite extreme of thrusting at ordinary, unsuspecting, faithful members of the Church literature which repudiates both the subjective and objective aspects of Faith, that is, both the virtue and content of Faith? Is this not incitement to "total repudiation of the Christian Faith" the word for which, according to Canon 751 of the new Code, is apostasy?

However, one must also acknowledge that Feminism is a sociological phenomenon of our times which should be looked at with compassion and understanding. A noted feminist, Ann O'Donnell, who died recently of cancer—God rest her soul—was formerly a member of the National Organization of Women, a radical feminist body, but left it and became one of the foundresses of your parent organization in the United States, WOMEN FOR FAITH AND FAMILY. And she pointed out that feminists are often those who, in their childhood, have suffered the consequences of the breakdown of their family life, especially when it was the father who was at fault. In consequence they have become embittered and an easy prey to the suggestion that the traditional religions of Judaism and Christianity have, as patriarchal institutions, oppressed women throughout their entire history. Similarly I would add myself, the nuns who have become radical feminists

are often victims of the collapse of their religious families and it is their consequent distress and disorientation that have given them the "I hate all male gods" syndrome. They should be listened to patiently when they explain their feelings and their predicament. But the most cruel thing that could possibly happen to them would be to let them have their way. And of course, men should assume their responsibility in the matter, whatever it is. And as for us priests, once more I say, for God's sake let us avoid making the confusion worse confounded.

### LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Now I am afraid I have brought you into a rather dark and dismal tunnel and you must be longing to see light at the end of it. By way of light, let us think of the holy women who followed Our Lord all the way, even to the foot of the Cross, and stood there, with his Mother, supporting him loyally and lovingly as he accomplished the supreme act of his priesthood. In the attitude of our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, and her women companions, we can see something of what the relationship between womanhood and priesthood truly is. A theology of this relationship has yet to be developed. But there are and always will be holy women in the Church who, like Mary and the other women at the foot of the Cross, acquire an intuitive or connatural knowledge of this mystery. And when one is fortunate to meet with such women, a sort of spiritual osmosis can take place whereby they convey some intimation of what they perceive in their hearts. This happened to me while I was giving a week's retreat in 1972, the year of the Silver Jubilee of my priesthood, to a community of sisters at Toledo, Ohio. Towards the end of it, they asked me to celebrate a Mass in honour of this anniversary. It usually takes me quite a while to compose a homily but somehow the words that I jotted down the night before came very easily to me in the house of those sisters. The title of it was "Divine Priesthood of Jesus—Divine Motherhood of Mary". I have put this homily at the end of Cassette No. 8 in order to conclude it on a positive note. It starts from the premise that the roles of the divine priesthood of Jesus and the divine motherhood of Mary were compli-



mentary to each other. Both had to be played in the drama of human salvation. For the son of God could not have received the body and blood wherewith to be our Priest and Victim had not Mary consented to become his Mother. The words which the Epistle to the Hebrews records as addressed to God the Father by his Son at the moment of Incarnation, "Thou hast given me a body. Lo I come to do thy will" could not have been uttered if Mary had not previously said to the Angel Gabriel, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word". But these two roles of divine motherhood and divine priesthood are not interchangeable. Mary could no more have been priest than Jesus could have been mother. The priesthood of Christ is not a job which can be chosen at will by anyone at all. It is a role for which one is chosen by God. And if God chooses that it be a masculine role, there is nothing else to say than: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

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## CURRENT COMMENT

# Our Lady's Well at Fernyhalgh

H. M. GILLETT

(Presented by the Editor)

## INTRODUCTION

In England, to speak of Our Lady is to speak of her shrines, of which there were so many at the time of the Reformation. How could it be otherwise in a land which for centuries had rejoiced in the proud title of *Dos Mariae*; Our Lady's Dowry. Rather than attempt the task myself, I have fallen back on one far, far better qualified than I am to write an account of one of the oldest of Our Lady's Shrines in my country. The account that follows of Our Lady's Well at Fernyhalgh in Lancashire and not far from Preston, is taken from Volume 2 of the late H. M. Gillett's *Famous Shrines of Our Lady*, published by Samuel Walker Ltd. The account that follows was published separately as well in *The Catholic Fireside*, a truly Catholic paper, owned and produced by Samuel Walker, Ltd. Unfortunately, this paper ceased publication some time ago. The article was circulated by the indefatigable Mr. Frank Swarbrick (the Shrine is only two miles from his home) to members of his Apostolate of Catholic Truth, through which he has done such fine work for the Catholic Church in this country in these very hard times.

Roughly, this is the story of how the following account of Our Lady's Well has come to me and, with its coming, my own determination to republish it in *Christian Order* by way of a small offering to Our Lady in this Marian Year. This month it replaces "Current Comment" as it should. A postscript at the end of the article, written by Mr. Swarbrick, brings the story of Fernyhalgh up to date and speaks of plans for the future of this Shrine of Our Lady.

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### *Protestant Attack on Our Lady's Shrines*

The Protestant attack on Our Lady's shrines in England came with little warning and before the majority of people were prepared for anything like it. For example, the King's Mass was still being said daily at Walsingham, and his Candle was yet burning in the Holy House when the commissioners arrived for the destruction. It was the same at Willesden and Caversham. In both places the shrines were in active use when Henry's representatives came to sweep them away.

In other lands the attacks came later and with far more warning. In many cases people had time to hide the beloved statues in the expectation of happier days to come. As a result there was a continuity in devotion denied to our countryfolk.

Even in places where the full force of penal laws was applied, with a severity hardly less drastic than in England, pilgrimages continued usually at dead of night. A splendid example is that of the Holy Chapel of Heiloo in North Holland. Even though it was unroofed, and pilgrimage proscribed, North Hollanders continued to frequent it, finding their way thither in large numbers at night and by footpaths hidden among the trees.

In England those shrines suffered first, and most suddenly, which were attached to some well-known abbey or city church, or those which stood close beside important highways, as at Caversham or Doncaster. Others there were, like that at Heiloo, hidden away in forests or hills, and they were more fortunate. There devotion to Our Lady continued, diminished perhaps as to numbers, but fervent and brave, even if cloaked with the secrecy which was the inevitable lot of Catholic recusancy.

### *Fernyhalgh : Hidden Away*

Just such a place was Fernyhalgh, nearly four miles from Preston. Of all English counties, it is probably true to say that Lancashire folk clung most tenaciously to the Faith. It would be unthinkable that they allowed themselves to be deprived entirely of external means of devotion to Our Lady. At Fernyhalgh there was left to them just this one astonishing opportunity.



Aloof from any highway, then hidden in dense woods, accessible only by concealed footpaths, there was a shrine of Our Lady already a century old and popular, with its statue and chapel and, above all, its Well of Our Lady.

*Reverend Christopher Tuttell: Story of the Shrine*

In later years, from 1699 - 1727, Fernyhalgh was served by a resident Catholic priest, renowned for his learning as well as for his constancy, in Reverend Christopher Tuttell. Most fortunately he left, in meticulous manuscript, an account both of the origin of the shrine, as he knew it, and of subsequent events up to the time of his writing. It is from his pen that the most authentic account of the founding of the shrine is preserved.

He entitled the story, "*The Traditional Account of Our Lady's Well and Chapel in Fernyhalgh*". It is best given in his own words:

"In 1471, temp. Henry 4th, a virtuous and wealthy merchant in great distress upon the Irish Sea had recourse, for his personal safety, to 'Him whom the winds and sea obey', and made a vow, in case he escaped the danger, to acknowledge the favour of his preservation by some remarkable work of piety. After this the storm began to cease, and a favourable gale wafted the ship into the coast of Lancashire.

"Whilst he thankfully reflected on his merciful deliverance from shipwreck, and was in pain to know by what pious work his vow might be acceptably fulfilled, a voice somewhat miraculous, yet providential, admonished him to seek a spot called Fernyhalgh and there to erect a chapel where he should find a *crab-tree bearing fruit without cores*. and under it a spring of clear water.

"In compliance with this singular occurrence, he spared no toil or trouble in travelling about . . . until at length he arrived at Priest-town (Preston), where, having taken up his lodgings for the night, the housemaid came in . . . and excused her late return, as she said, by having sought and followed a stray cow as far as Fernyhalgh. . .

"In the morning the traveller made the necessary enquiry, and a guide conducted him to Fernyhalgh, where he . . . found the aforesaid crab-tree and the spring foretold him, and also the unexpected, and until then undiscovered, figure

of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was the means for that spring to be called to this day, 'Our Lady's Well'; and the chapel he caused forthwith to be erected hard by it, which was dedicated, under God, to the honour of the Mother of Christ and was likewise called Our Lady's Chapel at Fernyhalgh".

There is now no means of checking the accuracy of the date given, 1471. From various records it is clear that there was a chapel of some kind at Fernyhalgh in 1348-49, when Archbishop Zouche gave licence for Mass to be said in the squire's (Thomas Singleton) oratories of Broughton (nearby), Fernyhalgh, and Farmunholes. But such a chapel might have been abandoned, which might, in turn, account for the discovery of a statue of Our Lady; or else the author could have been misinformed. At any rate, there are references to the Fernyhalgh Chapel in 1508; and in 1516, when it is mentioned as the Fernyhalgh Chapel *with its chantry*.

By Act of Parliament of Edward VI, 1647, chantries were suppressed, and it is said that the Fernyhalgh Chapel was then pulled down, and its furniture, bells and revenues were confiscated. "Nevertheless", wrote Mr. Tuttell, "the ancient devotion of neighbouring Catholics did not fail with the old chapel, but survived its ruin, and continued in their constant assembling and praying together at the Well on Sundays and Holy Days, and especially on the feasts of Our Lady, even in the severest times of persecution."

He adds in a later passage, "Several have . . . acknowledged special Benefits and Helps received by means of their frequent visiting and constant praying at Our Lady's Well; and others not only practis'd but also recommended to Posterity a more than ordinary devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in contriving, erecting, and finishing a House of Prayer there." It was the Catholic practice in those days to refer to secular priests as Mr — to religious only as Father.

This was in 1684-85, during the last year of the reign of Charles II. Thus, about a century after the demolition of the first, a second chapel in honour of Our Lady of Fernyhalgh was built beside the Holy Well. This chapel was in that part of the present house there, which runs north and south. It was in the upper part of the house and attracted large numbers of the faithful.

A letter written in 1701 by Reverend Edward Barlow, then Vicar General, from Park-hall, thanks a particular benefactor, Cuthbert Heskayth, Esq., for his beneficence "in procuring for us the house, for his past charity in paying the rent for it for over sixteen years, and for other assistance in the maintenance of it".

Another benefactor was Madame Westy, who gave £100 and a legacy. Bishop James Smith, first Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District, gave an embroidered vestment, altar frontal, and a large double gilt silver chalice, left to his disposal by Madame Westy.

That the chapel was popular, and served useful purpose, is evidenced by the record that, on September 8th, 1687 (Our Lady's Birthday), Bishop Leyburn confirmed there no less than one thousand and ninety-nine persons; a truly prodigious number even by present-day reckoning.

Contemporary references, too, remind us that the site of the original chapel was not altogether lost. Its site and much stonework were "visible close beside the ancient foot-path, in the meadow adjoining the walk at the Lady's Well", in the memories of elderly people still living in 1816.

A local antiquary, Mr. P. A. Whittle, F.S.A., who wrote an account in 1851, but who first visited Fernyhalgh in 1821, also records that a crab-tree, that grew fruit without cores, continued to grow over the Lady Well till "within the last forty years or more" (i.e., about 1810) when it was cut down by someone "which, perhaps, was thought a great feat at that time".

### *Troubles Thick and Fast*

The first years of Father (or Mr. as he was then called) Tuttell's ministry were quiet enough, until after the accession of King George I. Immediately enemies of the Faith, and they were many, took advantage to have the penal laws more strictly enforced once more. From then on troubles came thick and fast, not least those brought by the failure of the first Jacobite rising, the famous '15. Soldiers were told off to plunder and strip the Chapel.

Catholics hiding in the vicinity expected to see it go up in flames, but the soldiers contented themselves with what loot they could find. They went off with ornaments, pictures, one thurible and six large brass candlesticks.



This did not satisfy the Protestant element. Constables and pursuivants would come at night, hoping to catch the good priest unawares. On the Eve of the Epiphany, 1716, they came at midnight, but he was warned, and was obliged to lie all night in a haybarn in bitterly cold weather, to the music of owls and the squeaking of mice. Mr. Tuttell wrote, "Playing at Bo-Peep was all that winter's pastime".

So relentless was the search for him that for several months he was obliged to disappear and it was not until the Feast of the Assumption, 1717, that he was able to say Mass publicly (offer prayers) again at Fernyhalgh. His memoranda tells us "From the month of August, 1717, we continued to offer up our prayers at Lady Well Chapel in a more public manner". Then he adds dolefully, "But those halycon days soon expired . . . The 20th June, 1718, was the last day of public praying at Our Lady's Well".

Then there is another pathetic note. "On Monday, June ye last, 1718, the two chapels at Holy-Well were visited by twenty soldiers sent from Preston by the Commissioners, mounted on hired horses, and conducted by Mr. Hitchmough. The value of the booty is variously reported . . . not exceeding one hundred pounds". Mr. Hitchmough was a renegade and traitor priest.

One would have expected that to be the end but not so with the dauntless priest and his faithful people. Although the house was let by the Commissioners for a time, it remained empty. Fr. Christopher Tuttell's wonderful account ends with this note of hope: "We began to pray (i.e., to say Mass) at Our Lady's Well, privately, Aug. ye 5th (i.e., Feast of Our Lady of the Snows) 1725 and publicly Aug. ye 15th (Assumption of Our Lady) in ye same year".

So, one is grateful to know, Mr. Tuttell was able to end his ministry at Fernyhalgh in comparative peace. He died, R.I.P., in 1727 and was succeeded by an old friend, Mr. Edward Melling, who continued to serve Our Lady's Chapel until his own passing in 1733.

### *Destruction and Rebuilding*

The disaster which came in the train of the second Jacobite rising, the '45, was in fact greater than anything Mr. Christopher Tuttell experienced. Prince Charles' high-

land forces had pushed as far south as Manchester. Taking advantage of the crisis, a Protestant mob hastened to sack the Fernyhalgh Chapel, which they burned. But, still undaunted, the priest with the aid of his people rebuilt it. Within a decade or two their numbers had so increased that they had outgrown it.

By then the resident priest was Mr. Anthony Lund. He found the existing site restricted and, unable to buy adjacent land, decided on a site some ten minutes' walk away. There in 1792 work was begun on the building of a new church, the present St. Mary's, Fernyhalgh. Formal opening took place in 1794, that is thirty-five years before the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act.

Built to look like a residence outside, within there was a spacious, cruciform, church, capable of seating some 500 people. The sanctuary was adorned with three paintings and lit by two stained glass windows on either side. These still remain. The one on the Gospel side has as its theme the Litany of St. Joseph; the other represents the fifteen Mysteries of the Holy Rosary — fifteen bead-like medallions, of which the central one shows the Assumption of Our Lady.

### *Later Development*

For lack of information one may make no sweeping claim, but surely there can be few other such representations of Our Blessed Lady erected in England in the eighteenth century. The window itself ought to be recorded as a historic monument.

Fifty years later it was found possible to redecorate the interior of the church in a manner not previously possible. The most important feature then introduced was the great altar-piece. Statues of Our Lady had by that date been set up in very few churches; in St. Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham; in Holy Trinity Church, Radford, Oxfordshire; in St. George's Cathedral, Southwark; at Bishop Eton, Liverpool, and in a few other churches — St. Mary's, Brewood, Lanherne, and the Franciscan Convent, Taunton.

It was only five years since Mother Margaret Hallahan's valiant introduction of her own precious statue of Our Lady into her precious classroom. Here, at Fernyhalgh, some-

thing truly grand was achieved. The centre-piece of this reredos was an imposing figure of Our Lady in Majesty.

Our Lady is shown seated, in robe, ample mantle, with veil and small pointed crown. Around her head is a halo with thirteen stars. Seated on His Mother's lap is the Holy Child, also nimbed and crowned, holding a large, jewelled orb. Our Lady touches this, to show her part in His Kingdom. The two figures are enclosed in a great aureole composed of a series of fourteen "crowned Ms", monograms of Mary. Above are the figures of nine cherubim, and over all are two angels bearing a scroll with the invocation *Mater Christi: Ora Pro Nobis*. The whole piece is splendidly coloured and highly gilt, giving a wonderful richness to this remarkable sanctuary.

As soon as the new church was opened the old Chapel was closed. To our minds this is something of a pity and one wishes it might be remedied by the opening of a shrine chapel once again, open to the public, in the ancient Chapel House beside the Well. But in those days there was little room for sentimentality; the priest was obliged to live near the Blessed Sacrament.

The old house which Father Lund knew, became somewhat decayed, and was for a time used for cottage dwellings. In 1842, however, it was restored and in the following year was opened as an academy for young ladies. In 1821, when Mr. Whittle first visited it, an ancient stone cross still stood close beside Our Lady's Well. In the orchard stood another, at the head of a bower, incised with the initials "J. N. R. J."

Twenty years later the cross by the Well had been removed, even as the crab-tree had been felled. Again, in 1850, he found the Well restored and ornamented. A new cross had been erected in the adjacent garden, but that in the orchard was still visible. He refers to the base of the old cross by the Well as still being in situ.

### *As Things are Now*

Today, the house and chapel is used as a convent of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. The Well is always accessible by a little gate, by a tall tree just past the convent gateway, on the left coming from St. Mary's Church. Entering, the pilgrims must descend several stone steps,

which are apparently ancient, if restored. The Well, thus sunk, is not visible from the lane.

The Well itself is square, in a basin of free-stone, surrounded by a diamond-shaped border of flagstones which serve as a path. This is so narrow as to permit only of a single file of pilgrims at any one time. At the bottom of the steps is an alcove which shelters an oaken statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child, a fairly recent, but very beautiful addition. Almost any day this little shrine is decked with flowers; one may even find a daisy-chain around Our Lady's neck, so beloved is the place of little children !

There are current stories that the "founder" of Fernyhalgh was a certain Irish Chief, Fergus Maguire. Certainly an old chalice which bears the name is preserved in the priest's house down the lane. Actually there is some evidence that this was given to Fernyhalgh by a Miss Harrington shortly before 1872, when it is first mentioned. The reason for her gift is not known.

Chalices and ciboria of the time of Mr. Christopher Tuttell are still kept there, as well as his unique memoranda. But he certainly makes no mention of a possession so important or of any such Irish tradition.

Fernyhalgh has no need of fiction to support its claim to be one of the really important centres of devotion to Our Blessed Lady in England. From the first its Chapel and Holy Well have been dedicated to her. Here her feast days have always been specifically observed. For more than four centuries, with an unbroken tradition, it has been the centre of a loyal devotion to her, such as few other places in our land have enjoyed.

The recent Marian Year did much to draw wider attention to the existence of this very gracious and beautiful place of grace. In four centuries there has never been a decade when Our Lady's Well failed to attract her children. Of late their number has been much increased, augmented by pilgrims from far afield. It is not only a privilege to find one's way here but, one might say, almost a duty.

May every English speaking Catholic find an opportunity to visit and revere this secluded, holy spot, so blissfully hallowed, so wonderfully preserved. It is indeed, a place of Grace, one of the Chosen Places of Our Blessed Lady.



## POSTSCRIPT

### FRANK SWARBRICK WRITES

We have been engaged in an all-out effort to preserve the Marian Shrine at Fernyhalgh from the hands of secular interests — namely, the idea that Ladyewell House, on which site has stood a Chapel dedicated to the Mother of God for centuries, should be converted into a Centre for the rehabilitation of Drug Addicts. Had this happened, it would have changed the entire ethos of this sacred place but, *Deo Gratias*, after many prayers, petitions and pleas to the Bishop, the Diocesan Authorities withdrew the application after which the Bishop invited a very good priest and his housekeeper, herself a devoted “*Enfant de Marie*” to take over Ladyewell House and develop it as a Marian Centre and a sanctuary to house many priceless relics of our Martyrs which at present are somewhat scattered around the Diocese and beyond. The late Canon Joseph Bamber, who was perhaps the most knowledgeable Historian on our Martyrs in the country and who played a very important part in the process leading up to the Canonisation of the Forty Martyrs, had over many years acquired a unique collection of relics and memorabilia of the Martyrs which he lovingly preserved in his Parish Presbytery (the smallest parish in the diocese with only 26 souls!) at a little hamlet known as Dodding Green in Cumbria. Pilgrims from all over the country used to visit this tiny parish to venerate the relics and listen to Canon Bamber relate many a story of those “heroes of the Faith” to whom we owe so much. On his death the then Bishop of Lancaster ordered that these relics should be deposited at Ushaw College for safe keeping. It is now hoped that they will be returned to the Diocese to which they truly belong and be available for veneration in a Chapel dedicated to our Martyrs at Ladyewell House.

The restoration of Ladyewell House, Fernyhalgh and its development as a Marian-cum-Martyr Centre is going to cost a great deal of money. One of the main problems at the moment is access. At present this is by way of a narrow bridle path, very delightful and picturesque but not very practical in its present badly pot-holed state. Without destroying the charm of the approach to Ladyewell House

and the Shrine it will be necessary for some minimum road work to be undertaken. There will also be a need to install central heating, not so much for the Chaplain of Ladyewell who is a man of very simple—one could even say austere taste—but for the priceless relics which must be preserved by means of a regular temperature. The cost of this initial work is likely to run into several thousand pounds and we have undertaken to raise funds for this work. All this may sound very “parochial”, but the vision Father has is that this ancient Shrine should rank with Walsingham and Knock; even become a ‘petit Lourdes’. Would any readers of *Christian Order* like to be associated with this restoration? Cheques can be made payable to ‘A.C.T. (Ladyewell Fund)’ and sent to myself:

Mr. F. X. Swarbrick,  
3, Mooreside Avenue,  
Ribbleton,  
Preston, Lancs. PR2 6LU,  
United Kingdom.

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## LEST WE FORGET

### PRAYER FOR ENGLAND

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England thy Dowry, and upon us all who gently hope and trust in thee. By thee it was that Jesus, our Saviour and our hope, was given unto the world; and He has given thee to us that we may hope still more. Plead for us thy children, whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the cross, O sorrowful Mother. Intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the old true fold they may be united to the Chief Shepherd, the Vicar of thy Son. Pray for us all, dear Mother, that by faith fruitful in good works, we may deserve to see and praise God, together with thee in our heavenly home.

Amen.

In this article, Peter Wilders rounds off, so to say, what he said so well in condemnation of the evolutionist theory in his article, "Evolutionists at Bay", published in the Aug./Sept. (1987) issue of *Christian Order*. Here he shows, in all its mean arrogance, the totally unwarranted discriminatory practices of the contemporary scientific establishment in their endeavour to sustain the evolutionary theory and, with it, their own reputation.

## Follow-up on Evolution

PETER WILDERS

PANDORA'S box was opened in 1859 and the key to it was the Theory of Evolution. The evils let loose have afflicted mankind ever since. For a while the hierarchy in the Church resisted it because they saw in it a major threat to doctrinal teaching. Eventually, however, this resistance was worn down as the belief grew that science had proved Darwin's theory to be an irrefutable fact. For the progressive theologians, the discovery of evolution was the answer to a prayer. The Church, which in their view was completely bogged down in traditional teaching, could at long last be helped out of the mire on to the road to progress. They saw in this new situation a heaven-sent mission and they intended to lose no time accomplishing it.

### *Teilhard Leads the Way*

Providentially, in their opinion, there was in their midst a representative of the scientific establishment who was not only a paleontologist, able to give a first-hand confirmation that man had evolved from the lower primates, but also a Jesuit priest! Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a member of the intellectual élite of the Church, was a scientist who had no doubts or reservations whatsoever that evolution was a scientific fact. If there were any lingering doubts amongst the non-scientific theologians of the time, regarding the almost unbelievable turn of events, Father Teil-

hard's conviction, backed by his scientific credentials, removed them. Moreover, he pointed out the tremendous implications for the Faith involved by the discovery of this new knowledge and how it changed our perception of God's teaching.

### *The "New Theology"*

No time was lost in producing a "new theology" to accommodate this breakthrough in our understanding of divine revelation. The slate had to be rubbed clean and a new start made. Seminaries had to be provided with a new approach to the doctrines of Original Sin, Creation and Providence. The students who would provide the next generation of priests, as well as the catechists, had to be equipped to spread the "good news".

Of course, there were still some members of the clergy who stubbornly stuck to the traditional teaching of the Church. They were not necessarily opposed to the concept of evolution 'per se', but believed that it could be equated with the truths doctrinally propounded by the Church through the centuries. Surely there could be one truth, they said, and some still say it, and that truth is the Word of God which is immutable. Unfortunately, what they failed to appreciate was, that if evolution has really taken place, then the human specie has changed and its evaluation of the meaning of God's Word, as expressed through the Church's doctrine, has also changed! This is an inescapable fact. If human nature has evolved, so has its capacity to understand what God has revealed to us through the Scriptures. The exegetes have shown how those portions of the Bible that apparently contradict the evolutionary scenario, and there are a great many, can be explained away as allegories and fables for a primitive or "less evolved" people. It follows, incidentally, that any exegete who is sufficiently "unenlightened" not to believe in the evolutionary process, can hardly expect his work to be taken seriously. In recent years, a brilliant French exegete (Fernand Crombette) has fallen victim to this mentality and thirty years of research providing vital insight to the Scriptures remains unexamined by the Church. But this is another story. It is clear that if evolution has been taking place prior to and during the



history of mankind, our ability to comprehend God's Word has not only been changing but, as evolution implies improvement, it has been progressing. The concept of sin to the primitive Hebrew people would have been different from the concept of sin to Christ's more evolved disciples, and different again for people from our present stage of evolution. It is no use looking to the doctrinal definition of sin because, contrary to traditional teaching, evolution shows that no definition is immutable. Mutation is the essence of the evolutionary process and although the words of Church doctrine may be fixed for all time, the interpretation must, *ipso facto*, evolve. One might point to the doctrinal teaching of the Church: "If any one says that as science progresses it is sometimes possible for dogmas that have been proposed by the Church to receive a different meaning from the one which the Church understood and understands: let him be anathema". (Canon 3, chapter 4, Vatican Council 1869-70. DS 1818.)

### *Evolution and the Deposit of Faith*

Immediately, in the light of our new awareness of the evolutionary transformation of mankind's intellectual and even spiritual faculties, after all St. Thomas showed how the soul and the intellect were one, it can be seen how this doctrine has been superseded by events. It is clear that anyone who accepts the scientific fact of evolution, and wishes to be intellectually honest, must accept that doctrinal pronouncements of the past, collectively known as 'the deposit of the Faith', may need to be reinterpreted in the light of evolution. In fact this position is totally in accordance with St. Augustine's teaching:

### *St. Augustine's Rules*

"If they ever succeed in demonstrating any scientific truth with irrefutable evidence, let us show that the truth is not opposed to our Scripture . . ." (DS 1947.)

It would appear, therefore, that the proud boast of the Catholic Church to provide certitude of God's revelation through its teaching has taken a nasty knock with the acceptance of evolutionary doctrine as a fact of science.

Before closing the chapter and bowing to the inevitable, even though it may be of academic interest only to many, the second part of St. Augustine's teaching should be noted :

" . . . but if they (the scientists) ever cite anything from their works as opposed to our Scripture, that is to the Catholic faith, let us either show that it is false from our own sources or else hold with unhesitating faith that it is erroneous". This instruction, from one of the most learned Doctors of the Church, is illuminating. *In the first place*, he says that if a scientific truth is backed by irrefutable evidence, it must be harmonised with Church teaching. As the scientific "truth" under discussion is evolution, and in particular the evolution of man from the lower primates, the decision whether to accept it as not opposed to Church teaching can only be taken if it can be demonstrated that evolution is backed by irrefutable evidence. *The second part* of the instruction is very clear. If the proof is lacking and the proposed scientific "truth" is opposed to existing doctrine, the Church *must* disown it and show it is wrong. In other words, irrefutable scientific facts and Church teaching can never be in disagreement. If there is any discord it will be found that the scientific theory cannot be proved. St. Augustine, therefore, provides us with the rules for establishing both the validity of a proposed scientific truth and the inerrancy of revelation. So, how does the scientific fact of evolution stand up to the test?

### *Terms Must be Defined*

First of all, the terms need to be defined. Evolution does *not* mean varieties within a basic type, kind or species sharing the same gene-pool. The basic kind might be a single specie, such as mankind or *Homo Sapiens*, within which there are many varieties of human beings. Alternatively, the basic type may be at the genus level, as for example the various species of coyote. This basic kind might be called the 'dog' kind which could include also the wolf, the dog and the jackals. They are derived from a single stock and share the same gene pool. They are inter-fertile and produce fertile offspring. Evolution, sometimes referred to as macro-evolution, is the transformation of particles into elements, elements into complex chemicals, complex chemicals

into simple living systems, simple life forms into complex life, complex animal life into man. In simple terms, all the different kinds of plants, insects and animals alive today are believed to be related and to have evolved from common ancestors. Such transformism or evolution theory postulates that the primates, which include man and apes, shared a common ancestor with the horse. This is the theory that is believed by most people, including the vast majority of scientists, to be an established scientific fact, and for which "irrefutable evidence" must be available since it challenges the immutability of Catholic doctrinal teaching.

### *Your Questions Answered*

Answers to the following questions should elucidate the position. They come exclusively from prominent scientists believing in evolution.

1. Has anyone ever seen evolution happening?

"Evolution, at least in the sense that Darwin speaks of it, cannot be detected within the lifetime of a single observer". (David Kitts, "Paleontology and Evolutionary Theory" in *Evolution*; Vol. 28; September 1974, p. 466).

Comment. A process which has never been observed to occur, in all human history, should not be called scientific.

2. Are there any new species originating? Can just one example be cited?

"No one has ever produced a species by mechanism of natural selection. No one has gotten near it . . ." (Colin Patterson, "Cladistics". Interview on BBC, March 4, 1982. Dr. Patterson is the senior paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History.)

"Darwin never really did discuss the origin of species in his *On the Origin of Species*". (Cited by Niles Eldridge in *Time Frames: The Rethinking of Darwinian Evolution and the Theory of Punctuated Equilibria*, 1985, p. 33.)

Comment. Not only could Darwin not cite a single example of a new species originating, but neither has anyone else, in all the subsequent century of evolution study.

3. After 125 years since Darwin advanced his theory, and with thousands of trained biologists studying the problem using untold millions of pounds worth of complex lab equipment, does anyone know how evolution works?

"Evolution is . . . troubled from within by the troubling complexities of genetic and development mechanisms and new questions about the central mystery—speciation itself". (Keith S. Thompson, "The Meaning of Evolution", *American Scientist*. Vol. 70. Sept./October 1982, p. 529.)

Comment. "Speciation", i.e. the very mechanism of changing one species into another, is still "the central mystery!"

4. Does the fossil record (the thousands of millions of known fossils) provide evidence of evolution?

"The known fossil record fails to document a single example of phyletic evolution accomplishing a major morphologic transition . . ." (Steven M. Stanley, "Macroevolution: Pattern and Process", 1979, p. 39.)

"As is now well known, most fossil species appear instantaneously in the fossil record, persist . . . virtually unchanged, only to disappear abruptly . . ." (Tom Kemp, "A Fresh Look at the Fossil Record", *New Scientist*, Vol. 108, Dec. 5, p. 67. Dr. Kemp is Curator of the University Museum at Oxford University.)

Comment. The fossil record is believed by many scientists to be the best evidence for evolution. Yet, despite the abundance of fossils, it has not yielded a single unequivocal transitional form with transitional structures in the process of evolving.

5. Is there any order in the fossils? If there are no true transitional forms in the fossils, is there any "general" evidence of evolutionary progression in the actual fossil sequences?

"The fossil record of evolution is amenable to a wide variety of models ranging from completely deterministic to completely stochastic". (David Raup, *American Scientist*, Vol. 166, January/February 1977, p. 57.)

"I regard the failure to find a clear 'vector of progress' in life's history as the most puzzling fact of the fossil record . . . we have sought to impose a pattern that we hoped to find on a world that does not really display it". (S. J. Gould, *Natural History*, Vol. 93, February 1984, p. 23. Dr. Gould is Professor of Geology at Harvard.)

". . . If we date the rocks by their fossils, how can we then turn around and talk about patterns of evolutionary change



through time in the fossil record?" (N. Eldridge, as above p. 52.)

"A circular argument arises: Interpret the fossil record in the terms of a particular theory of evolution, inspect the interpretation, and note that it confirms the theory. Well, it would, wouldn't it?" (T. Kemp, as above, p. 66.)

6. Is there any evidence that evolution is possible? (The basic reason why there is no scientific evidence of evolution in either the present or the past is that the law of increasing entropy, or the second law of thermodynamics, contradicts the very premise of evolution. The evolutionist assumes that the whole universe has evolved upward from a single primeval particle to human beings, but the second law (one of the best-proved laws of science) says that the whole universe is running down into complete disorder. "How can the forces of biological development and the forces of physical degeneration be operating at cross purposes? It would take, of course, a far greater mind than mine even to attempt to penetrate this riddle. I can only pose the question . . ." (Sydney Harris, *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan. 27, 1984.)

Comment. Evolutionists commonly attempt to sidestep this question by asserting that the second law applies only to isolated systems. But this is wrong!

"... the quantity of entropy generated locally cannot be negative irrespective of whether the system is isolated or not". (Arnold Sommerfield, *Thermodynamics and Statistical Mechanisms*, 1956, p. 155.)

7. Is there any evidence from similarities?

"It is now clear that the pride with which it was assumed that the inheritance of homologous structures from a common ancestor explained homology was misplaced". (Sir Gavin de Beer, *Homology, An Unsolved Problem*, 1971, p. 15. Sir Gavin is a leading European evolutionist.)

"The really significant finding that comes to light from comparing the protein amino acid sequences is that it is impossible to arrange them in any sort of an evolutionary series". (M. Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 289.) Dr. Denton is a research microbiologist in Australia.

8. Is there any evidence from recapitulation or vestigial

organs? (N.B. It is still believed by many that the embryonic development in the womb recapitulates the evolution of the species. This belief has been used to justify abortion by assuming the foetus in its initial stage was not yet human as it was recapitulating the "fish" stage of its evolution . . .) ". . . the theory of recapitulation . . . should be defunct today". (S J. Gould, "Dr. Down's Syndrome", *Natural History*, 1980, p. 144.) "An analysis of the difficulties in unambiguously identifying functionless structures . . . leads to the conclusion that 'vestigial organs' provide no evidence for evolutionary theory". (S. R. Scadding, *Evolutionary Theory*, Vol. 5, May 1981, p. 173.) Apart from its necessity as a support for atheism or pantheism, there is clearly no *scientific* evidence for evolution. Yet, real science has evolved! It has progressed to the point where evolution can be seen to be a belief based not on science but on pure speculation.

In *Humani Generis*, Pope Pius XII makes direct reference to "These false evolutionary notions, with their denial of all that is absolute or fixed . . ." His encyclical was written to draw attention to "the false options which threaten to sap the foundation of the Catholic Teaching". A more prophetic warning would be difficult to find in the annals of Church history.

### *Back to Origins*

Catholic Teaching is in shreds. The moral teaching of the Church has been abandoned and it is the media that establishes the moral norms. As a result, few people are aware that these norms are in violent opposition to the Church's teaching as expressed through its teaching Magisterium. The existence of a television, copies of various dailies in the local presbytery is a "confirmation" that the media provides no obstacle to the faith. The suggestion that this situation, which alienates man from his Maker, is either wrong or is in any way connected with evolutionary philosophy is rejected with scorn. So what is the solution? In the writer's opinion, as with creation or evolution one has to go back to origins. If the origin of the present catastrophic situation is a misplaced belief that evolution is possible, then if that belief is dispelled, the situation should improve. Certainly,

the scientists are there, in their thousands, to demonstrate the impossibility of evolution, its non-conformity with the basic laws of science and the complete absence of proof.

### *Discrimination by Scientific Establishment*

Unfortunately, any scientist that is known to disagree with the majority view that evolution is uncontestably a fact of science is a marked man. He will be ostracized by the scientific establishment and refused admission to any post of authority. The list of scientists, particularly teachers, who have been blocked, demoted or dismissed as a result of their disagreement on scientific grounds with the theory of evolution is lengthening. Many scientists cannot afford to jeopardise their careers by making their views known. The result of this discrimination process is that such organisations as the Pontifical Academy of Science will, by its very nature, only admit distinguished scientists approved by the scientific establishment. Yet, in the present climate, no scientist can become 'distinguished' unless he holds to the evolutionary view.

### *The Holy Father in Trouble*

It is, therefore, virtually impossible for the Holy Father to come into contact with anyone amongst his scientific advisors who doubts the validity of evolutionary dogma. An examination of the list of members of the Pontifical Academy as well as its published records bears witness to the accuracy of this observation. The Vicar of Christ is constantly confronted with the inevitability of evolution as an explanation of human origins. There is scarcely a major meeting of the Academy when the reality of evolution is not confirmed to him. The situation has pertained for so long that no one in the Hierarchy from the Sovereign Pontiff and his doctrinal councillor, Cardinal Ratzinger, downwards, appear as able to do anything but bow to the inevitable.

There are indeed some who have reservations. The Holy Father, himself, is an example. The weight of scientific opinion, however, is so strong that those reservations have no impact. The Pope may well say that evolution can

only be acceptable provided the principle of "divine causality" is admitted. Unfortunately, such declarations merely add fuel to the evolutionary fire. They are interpreted as the Church's tacit approval of evolution and for the theology associated with it to continue. Tragically, there is no one in the Holy Father's entourage to point out the inconsistency of "divine causality" as a prerequisite for the acceptance of evolutionary theory. The inconsistency resides in the fact that the official theory of evolution, "The General Theory of Evolution" as taught in the major universities throughout the world, *depends* on the principle of random or blind chance, mistakes and absence of design. Since God is the antithesis of these factors, it is illogical to suggest He should be substituted for them. The Holy Father is not expected to know the requirements of the General Theory of Evolution, but his scientific advisors do! In the words of Dr. William Provine, Professor of Biological Sciences at Cornell University, writing in *Bioscience* in June, 1982:

"... modern evolutionary biology has shattered the hope that some kind of designing or purposive force guided human evolution and established the basis of moral rules. Instead, biology leads to a wholly mechanistic view of life . . . There are no gods and no designing forces. The frequently made assertion that modern biology and assumptions of the Judeo-Christian tradition are fully compatible, is false".

The diabolical success of Lucifer and his attendants in using this apparently innocent instrument to destroy the Faith is clear to see.

### *Evolution Theory Should be Totally Abandoned*

Somehow, the Holy See has got to be advised that the weight of evidence accumulating against the evolution theory is now more than sufficient for it to be totally abandoned. Certainly, the scientific establishment will not change its "beliefs". Its leaders have staked their atheism upon evolution providing a naturalistic, mechanistic explanation or origins. It is, therefore, up to us.



We are publishing in two parts this moving Memoir of the great Cardinal Mindszenty. It was written by Kevin Grant for "Aid to the Church in Need" and published by them in their Bulletin. They and the Author have our thanks. It is a privilege to publish such an article, especially at this time in the Church.

# Valiant Shepherd Cardinal Mindszenty

(MEMOIR FOR AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED)

KEVIN GRANT

THE MAKING : FIFTY-SIX YEARS

**I**N the early evening of 26 December 1948 József Cardinal Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, a slim man of medium height, knelt at a prie-dieu in his residence in Esztergom. The door flew open. A police colonel named Décsi entered, officers thronging after him. "We have come to arrest you". The cardinal asked for their warrant. "We don't need anything like that", they yelled and led him away, trying to prevent him taking leave of his mother. He managed to embrace her but the police forced him into a car with curtained windows. He later wrote, "I tried to say the rosary. But I could not. I remembered the words of Scripture: 'Your time has come now, and darkness has its will'". (Lk. 22, 53)

Jósef Mindszenty was born on 29 March 1892 in Mindszent on the western border of Hungary. He renounced his family name of Pehm as too Germanic in 1941 in protest against Nazism, adopting instead the name of his native village. His mother's influence was immense. In his book *The Mother* he has left a moving tribute to this wise and devout peasant woman; her love sustained him in his bitterest trials.

Educated by Norbertines in Szombathely, he almost abandoned his studies when his younger brother died. His

parents then wanted József to inherit the farm but they relented. He entered the diocesan seminary in Szombathely and fared so well that his bishop, János Mikes, wanted to send him to the Pazmaneum in Vienna, an institute for Hungarian seminarians. He persuaded his bishop against this, little knowing then that he was to find his final home there. His bishop, later to die defending Hungarian women, ordained him priest on 12 June 1915.

### *Remarkable Gifts*

His priestly office was a source of deep joy to him. His first appointment was in Felsőpáty, where a good pastor schooled him in the love and service of rich and poor alike and saw him develop remarkable pastoral gifts. After eighteen months he was sent to teach religion at the state grammar school in Zalaegerszeg.

In October 1918, in the wake of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the Left seized power, Count Mihály Károlyi heading a revolutionary government. The young priest led the local opposition to this group, was arrested in February 1919 and forbidden to return to Zalaegerszeg. In March the communists and their allies took over. This was the Béla Kun uprising and appalling terror followed. The young priest was re-arrested but mercifully this dictatorship soon collapsed.

In October 1919 Father József was appointed parish priest in Zalaegerszeg. He served his flock in social as well as spiritual matters. By prodigious personal visiting he learnt the name of every Catholic in the town. He built churches, presbyteries and religious houses and schools. In 1924 he was appointed a titular abbot and in 1937 a papal prelate.

When Germany occupied Hungary in 1944 the redoubtable monsignor became one of Nazism's most obstinate and serious opponents. He saw politics as a necessary evil in a priest's life whenever politics overturned the altar and imperilled souls. On 4 March 1944 the Pope named him Bishop of Veszprém, in the heart of western Hungary. He arrived there on his 52nd birthday, ten days after the Nazis had occupied the city. By June he was joining the other Hungarian bishops in defending the Jews and many were

thus saved. Despite the chaos of the war the new bishop plunged into his pastoral duties. He promoted days of recollection, retreats and conferences for his clergy, supported the lay apostolate, fostered pastoral visiting and care for the sick and dying. He also established many new parishes and schools.

But greater sufferings for Hungary were imminent. In the autumn of 1944 secret attempts to lead Hungary out of the war failed and the Russians advanced on Budapest. Their pillaging and rape drove thousands westwards. Bishop Mindszenty drew up a memorandum to the government, imploring them not to allow undevastated western Hungary to become a battleground between the Red Army and the retreating Axis troops; their reply was to arrest him. He remained a prisoner until his gaolers fled before the Russian advance. Among those with him were Fr. Tibor Mészáros, years later his secretary in exile and Fr. László Lékai, today his successor as Cardinal Primate. Their risks were real. Old Bishop Mikes died from a heart attack and Bishop Apor was murdered by Russian soldiers, both trying, in separate incidents, to protect Hungarian women from rape. Weakened by prison, Bishop Mindszenty returned to find Veszprém in an indescribable condition. After brief convalescence at home in his mother's care, he resumed intensive pastoral work. Everywhere the Red Army had plundered and destroyed, violating and dishonouring defenceless little girls and old women.

On 29 March 1945 the old Primate Cardinal Serédi had died and now the Pope appointed Bishop Mindszenty, the youngest bishop, to succeed him. Meantime the communists expelled the Papal Nuncio. It was the beginning of their war against the Catholic Church; it continues to this hour although by methods now as refined as water dripping onto a forehead.

A storm howled through the war-damaged Esztergom Cathedral during the new Primate's enthronement on 7 October 1945. "I want to be a good shepherd", he said, "who, if need be, gives his life for his flock, his Church and his country". He organised the relief of hunger in his ravaged country, going to Rome to beg Pope Pius's help. Food and clothing flowed in from the USA but the com-

munists soon stopped this saving help. The Primate next turned to defend the thousands cruelly herded into camps under communist reprisals, visiting prisoners who wept as he blessed them. But when László Rajk succeeded Imre Nagy as Interior Minister, this visiting was impeded.

The crack-down on the Church continued, the communists allowing her virtually no social or charitable activity. They cloaked their thuggery by pressurising or tricking priests into being photographed, smiling, with Rákosi and other henchmen and infiltrated the Church in other ways. Her publishing was censored, her organisations dissolved, her schools attacked. Bullying police searched desks and satchels, forced pupils to denounce their teachers and "found" weapons. Cardinal Mindszenty founded a Parents' Association to counter all this and it took three years before the authorities dared nationalise the schools. On that day, 18 June 1948, he ordered that all the church bells of Hungary should ring in protest. Earlier, in a famous pastoral letter, the Primate attacked the evacuation of Hungarians from southern Czechoslovakia and of long-settled Germans from Hungary. Grateful Germans have never forgotten this.

Whatever happened in politics, Cardinal Mindszenty remained first a pastor. He broke up the huge parishes of Budapest, sending young priests into smaller districts and visiting the faithful himself with his usual zeal. The spiritual life of the city deepened. On 5 May 1946 100,000 men processed behind their archbishop to the shrine at Máriaremete. He issued 23 pastoral letters in the 39 months of his active primacy, living austerely, even without heat in winter, to share his people's privations. He declared a Marian Year on Assumption Day 1947; 4,600,000 people were to join in its many solemnities.

### *Surrounded With Spies*

The communists disrupted the services, demanded the resignation of certain clergy and lay leaders, slandered the Primate in the media and surrounded him with spies. They hounded him to his mother's house, even to his father's grave. They suborned weak priests — forerunners of the 'peace priests' — into demanding the dismissal of their cardinal. But the Pope stood firm behind him.



Although even with terror and corruption the communists gained only 17 per cent of the votes in the 1945 election and 22 per cent in that held in August 1947, they used forgery, trickery and terror to seize control of parliament. Mátyás Rákosi now attacked the cardinal more strongly than ever; ranting about “spies, traitors, currency peddlars and fascists hiding under the priest’s cassock and the Cardinal’s robe”. People were dragooned into demanding “work, bread and a rope for Mindszenty”. The Primate defended himself and his duty to make the Church’s teaching known. 30,000 pilgrims went with him on his last pilgrimage, to Pálösszentkut, on 10 October 1948.

But he was doomed. They seized and brainwashed his unfortunate secretary, Fr. András Zakar (who died only this year, RIP) and they must have hoped the cardinal would flee. But he stayed. He took leave of his bishops on 16 December and bade them sign no agreements: “In an atheistic state, a Church that does not keep its independence can only play the role of a slave”.

On 23 December the notorious Lieut-Colonel Décsi led his police to occupy the cardinal’s house with Fr. Zakar, now laughing insanely, as their broken and demented guide. The cardinal’s arrest followed three days later.

## THE BREAKING : THIRTY-NINE DAYS

They took their prisoner to 60 Andrásy Street in Budapest, an address made notorious previously by the Gestapo as a torture centre. In charge of the system of terror was the sadistic Lieutenant-General Gábor Péter. This monster, who presided over every method of torture from clubbing of the kidneys to driving needles under the fingernails, still lives in Budapest—but without his name on the door of his flat.

In a cold ground-floor room, in front of a giggling crowd, a police major and a lame secret policeman grabbed the cardinal and stripped him naked, giving him an Oriental clown’s outfit to wear. “You dog, how we have been waiting for this moment”, screamed the paunchy major. They led him upstairs to a cell with no bed, just a battered couch. He was not to be alone there or allowed to sleep. Coarse and filthy talk was constant. At 11 pm he was taken for his

first interrogation before Décsi, and was asked how he had "become an enemy of his country" His answers were curtailed. "The defendants here have to make a confession in the form that we want", said Décsi (Décsi holds a high position in the cultural field today).

### *Scoffing Spectators*

They returned the cardinal to his cell at 3 am and ordered him to undress; he refused so they stripped him. A huge lieutenant entered, charged and kicked the Primate, laughing diabolically. Then the major thrashed the naked prisoner on every part of his body with a rubber truncheon. Cardinal Mindszenty whimpered under the unceasing attack and fainted. On his recovering they demanded he sign a confession. He refused. "Take him back". He was thrashed again. Again they demanded his confession. He refused. Again they stripped and beat him in front of scoffing spectators. Still he would not sign. They took him to his cell. Day was breaking. He had resisted them for one night but knew that any man could break under such torture sooner or later. The mere threat or savour of it reduced many to informers.

That first day he refused food and 'medication' as long as he could, tried to meditate but felt in his soul, body, nerves and bones the power of Bolshevism crushing his country. Dark fears for Hungary's youth filled his soul but his heart still turned to Mary, Patroness of Hungary. His captors spoke ever more obscenely if they thought he was mediating or praying. At 11 pm the interrogations resumed with ludicrous charges of revolution and treason being put. Décsi again cut short the cardinal's defence and again had him tortured with the truncheon. Unbelievably he still had the resources to deny them his signature. He refuted their charges and was beaten once more. He had held out a second night.

They left him bread and wine and he was able to say Mass, twice, a tactical softening for an unaltered objective. He asked to see Gábor Péter, the commandant, who only threatened him with more torture if he would not compromise. Interior Minister János Kádár, leader today of satellite Hungary, at that point lied to the media that the

cardinal had confessed to conspiracy, espionage and currency speculation. It ought always to be remembered that Kádár's 'achievements', praised in the West today, were built on lies, torture and death.

### *Sickening Blows*

The terrible alternation of torture and questioning was kept up over 39 days and nights, refined in one session by his being forced to run round his cell to escape knife thrusts as well as the sickening blows of the truncheon. Those unspeakable wretches even threatened to parade their defenceless prisoner naked and cowering before his mother.

At last Cardinal Mindszenty broke. First he gave the names of people who were dead or had fled, then he wrote 'cf' by his signature, *coactus feci*, meaning 'signed under coercion', but finally even his memory of what he was undergoing failed him. They paraded his tortured secretary and other priests before him and concluded their ghastly labours against him with the work of forgers who soon fled to the USA and told the truth. In those 39 days and nights the communists had shattered one of the noblest personalities of the Church.

### SHOW TRIAL : THREE DAYS

On 3 February 1949 his torturers led the cardinal into court, one among a crowd of defendants gathered by the authorities to imply a conspiracy. They had shaved their victim expertly, dressed him in a new black suit and put his bishop's ring back on his finger. Judge, prosecutor and, most shamefully, his defending counsel Dr. Kálmán Kiczko, 'a good Catholic', all played parts well rehearsed. It was a travesty worthy of Stalin and Rákosi. The cardinal later recalled the court did not ask a single question that could have brought the truth to light.

### *Servitude for Life*

The broken Primate sat in the dock with staring eyes, his voice trembling as he repeated that the political police had done nothing to him. His 'defender', the wretched Kiczko, told the court that Cardinal Mindszenty had had full facil-

ities at Andrásy Street to defend himself against the charges. He asked that his client 'only' be sentenced to penal servitude for life, not executed. This was the sentence meted out. The whole trial, with its chicaneries and complexities, was hustled through in three days and in its wake the cardinal was freshly pilloried in the communist Press.

But the Pope, knowing all, defended the Cardinal before the world. He wrote to the Hungarian bishops, addressed the College of Cardinals, the diplomats of the Holy See and the faithful in St. Peter's Square. He flayed Marxist 'justice': "The persecution of our beloved son . . . carried out with unblusing impiety, and his brutal removal from his episcopal see, has filled us with deep sorrow". And again: "Today's persecutors of the Church are the disciples of Nero. The totalitarian and anti-religious state demands, for toleration and a dubious recognition, a Church that is silent when it should speak out. . . Can the Pope remain silent when a state. . . takes it upon itself to dissolve dioceses and dismiss bishops and restricts (the Church's) activities to a level making meaningful apostolate ineffective?"

### *Soviet Slanders*

The free world heard his voice and shared his shock, despite coarse Soviet slanders. Rákosi had himself photographed with the duped vicar-general of Budapest, Béla Witz, the captions claiming that 'excellent' relations existed between Church and state.

The world was nevertheless awakened at that hour to realise that it must defend itself against communism or suffer as the satellites had. It has nodded since.

### PRISON : EIGHT YEARS

While the communists felt the world remained interested in their prisoner they kept him in the hospital of the common prison. His torturer, the sadistic major, was commandant there and his bed was bug-ridden, but his conditions were better than before his trial and he was able to say Mass with wine unofficially procured. After two weeks his mother was allowed to visit him.

He was not allowed either a copy of his trial judgment or a lawyer to help him appeal. He wrote for help to the



senior archbishop at liberty, József Grösz, but forgeries were added to his letter by which he seemed to admit 'his crimes' and to urge the bishops to conclude an agreement with the state.

On her third visit to the prison his mother found her son in poor spirits, broken and sick, and demanded proper medical help for him. Instead they sent him to a stricter prison, not even telling his mother he had been moved. He never learnt the name of this prison where he was to spend the next four years. His clothing was ripped off him on arrival amidst an exchange of filthy remarks. They put him in a cell with foul graffiti on its mouldering walls.

His *Memoirs* recall his sombre reflections in solitary confinement. "It was as hard to catch a glimpse of a fellow convict as of a white raven". Those hypocrites who thrashed him with truncheons now forbade him to kneel 'on health grounds' and even made sleeping a torment. His hands and face had to be kept visible and if he hid them, from cold or bugs, he was shaken awake.

He filled his days with prayer—for the Church, Hungary, his archdiocese, his fellow prisoners, for youth, his mother and the Holy Souls, for his enemies, his guards and his persecutors. From June 1950 he was allowed once again to say Mass, a tiny telephone table serving as an altar. A picture of the crucified Christ was its only decoration. The hand-written dedication '*Devictus vincit*' means 'Defeated he conquers'. He managed to keep it with him wherever he was taken and his gaolers never found it, even when putting him to shameful searches.

Illness heightened his sufferings. His weight was almost halved during 1954 so that he once fainted, struck his head and was found in a pool of blood. On her next half-yearly visit his dismayed mother again demanded better care for him and things did get a little better.

Meantime the odious Rákosi was at the peak of his power. In 1950 he even had János Kádár, the Interior Minister, thrown into prison for "Titoism" and tortured. Rákosi had at his disposal 60,000 secret police, many of them schooled in torture. The State Office for Church Affairs stimulated the "peace priest" movement, using corrupt or intimidated clergy. Old Archbishop Grösz was

tortured and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment, other bishops were placed under house arrest and communist supervisors were put into each bishop's chancellery to control Church appointments.

### *A Heart Attack*

Stalin's death brought change. In May 1954 the cardinal was moved back to the hospital of the Budapest prison. His conditions improved but he fell ill again in 1955 at a moment when Rákosi, who had over-reached himself, should have been embarrassed by his death. He was now confined in an old villa in Püspösztézlászóló, in southern Hungary. He had a heart attack on arrival there. Conditions were strange. His mother, now 80, could visit him freely. Archbishop Grösz was placed there too and the cardinal began to learn of events beyond his prison. The cardinal and the archbishop were now described as 'guests'. The villa being impossible in winter, for guards or 'guests', the prelates were moved again in November. They were taken to Almásy Castle, Felsőpentény, near the border with Czechoslovakia.

Archbishop Grösz was now amnestied and Rákosi attempted to ingratiate his tottering regime with the cardinal. But his prisoner declined to confuse his flock by accepting conditional release. "Given the choice of death in prison or freedom at the price of a shameful compromise", he wrote, "I prefer death". But death was not next in his destiny.

*(To be Concluded)*

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### **ECUMENISM ?**

A marriage  
Between truth and error  
Can only generate a brood  
Of halfbreeds.

Immersed in historicism, Schillebeeckx says that we must abandon the hierarchical view of the Church and give the power of ordaining to the local congregation. Acknowledgements and thanks to the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*.

# Catholic Priest or Presbyterian Minister

GEORGE H. DUGGAN, S.M.

FATHER Edward Schillebeeckx's book *Ministry: A Case for Change*<sup>1</sup> is a revolutionary manifesto. It is more discreetly worded than Hans Kung's *Why Priests?* or Luther's *Babylonian Captivity*, but it has the same strategic objective — the creation of a new church order that is radically different from the one that has prevailed in Christendom for at least 1500 years. The revolutionary tactics by which this change is to be brought about consist in illegal experimentation on the part of great numbers of local communities. This will eventually force the hand of the Roman authorities to adopt the new order which Schillebeeckx has proposed.

He argues that the Catholic conception of church order expounded by the Council of Trent was a medieval development, and he wants a return to what he contends was the conception of the Christian ministry that prevailed in New Testament times and or several centuries afterwards.

## Schillebeeckx and the Hierarchical Church

Christian ministry, he maintains, is a charisma of spiritual leadership and has nothing to do with the hierarchical structure of the Church. This hierarchical structure, he says (p. 5), developed from below in accordance with the sociological laws of group formation. It is an historically conditioned means of salvation, a purely factual dimension (p. 83), utterly bound up with a specific conditioned history (p. 84). Indeed, he declares that the conception of the Church as hierarchial is "pseudo-Christian" (p. 84). This

means that, if Christ intended to found a Church, he had no intention of giving it a hierarchical structure. This being so, there is no reason why the structures of the Church should not be changed in order to meet the needs of a new historical situation. We are engaged in the quest for a new discovery of Christianity (p. 75), and therefore in the quest for a new church order, because the existing order has lost its credibility and is in urgent need of being revised (p. 79).

The revision of church order which he advocates would result in a state of affairs very like that which prevails in Presbyterianism. All that would be needed for ordination to the Christian ministry would be a call from a local congregation, to a suitable candidate to become the leader of this congregation, the acceptance of this call by the prospective minister, and the laying on of hands by the congregation, accompanied by prayer to the Holy Spirit (pp. 41, 58).

The Council of Trent defined that the hierarchical character of the Church is divinely ordained. Schillebeeckx maintains (p. 64) that God in his providence saw to it that the original text, which had the words *divina institutione* was changed by the Council to read *divina ordinatione* (p. 64). What Trent said was: "Si quis dixerit in Ecclesia catholica non esse hierarchiam *divina ordinatione institutam*, quae constat ex episcopis, presbyteris et ministris, anathema sit"<sup>2</sup>. There may be a difference in meaning between *divina institutione* and *divina ordinatione instituta*, but if so it is infinitesimal.

### **The character is a stumbling block**

The Council of Trent also defined that the Sacrament of Holy Orders imparts a character to the one who receives it, so that he who has received this sacrament cannot afterwards become a layman.<sup>3</sup> This definition, Schillebeeckx declares, "is not a Christian dogma, but broadly speaking, the official teaching of the Western, Latin, church" (p. 65). So much for the special providence watching over the Council of Trent when it was framing its definitions!

For Schillebeeckx, the priestly character is merely functional. It is the charism of the ministry, and it ceases to exist when the ministry is laid aside. He is irked by the notion of the character as a permanent, objective reality in



the Christian minister, for this would make it an ontological reality, and with his empiricist philosophy, he is allergic to ontological realities. He several times uses the word "ontological", and always disparagingly. So we find him speaking of "the ontological, even magical sacerdotalizing of the priesthood", (p. 55). At the Reformation there was a breakthrough, which the Fathers of the Council of Trent, blinkered by their acceptance of the medieval theology of the ministry, failed to appreciate (pp. 60-61).

Like the Protestant Reformers, Schillebeeckx appeals to the New Testament to justify his rejection of the teaching of the Catholic Church. "The New Testament", he writes, "allows the Church every freedom in the specific structures of the ministry; even the choice of an episcopal or presbyteral church order is not a schismatic factor in the light of the New Testament" (p. 69). This means that for him the New Testament would allow the Church to abolish the papacy, since the Pope is a bishop; nor can any evidence from the New Testament be adduced to settle the dispute between Episcopalians and Presbyterians.

He contends that a local community has a right to the Eucharist, so that in certain cases, if an ordained minister is not available, the community can designate one of their number to preside at the Eucharist. "In extreme circumstances", he writes, "for instance, given a total lack of ministers, an apostolic community can call one of their fellow-Christians to be a minister to preside over them." And, he adds a little later, this means presiding over their eucharist (p. 139).

We find Luther expounding the same idea in his *Appeal to the Ruling Class of German Nationality*, issued in 1520. "Suppose", he wrote, "a small group of earnest Christian laymen were taken prisoner and settled in the midst of a desert without any episcopally ordained priest among them; and then agreed to choose one of themselves, whether married or not, and endow him with the office of baptizing, administering the sacrament, pronouncing absolution, and preaching, that man would be as truly a priest as if he had been ordained by all the bishops and popes."<sup>4</sup>

### **Scholarship is lacking**

Schillebeeckx admits that in the present circumstances it would be against the law for a Catholic community to act

in this fashion, but he hopes that "illegality" of this kind will eventually bring about a change in the Church (pp. 77-80, 103). When this change has taken place, priestly ordination will no longer be regarded as a sacrament which imparts an indelible character to the one ordained, but as a rite by which the congregation chooses its president to exercise certain functions for a certain time, so that when he ceases to exercise these functions, he becomes an ordinary member of the congregation (p. 41).

Schillebeeckx seeks to justify his revolutionary conception of the Christian ministry by appealing to the witness of the New Testament and the practice of Christian antiquity, but his scholarship in both fields leaves a lot to be desired.

His tendentious use of these authorities is already evident in the opening sentence of his Introduction, where he writes: "*Ecclesia non est quae habet sacerdotes* wrote the church father Jerome: 'There can be no church community without a leader or team of leaders.' " St. Jerome was not acquainted with the English language, but if he had been, he would surely have been surprised to find *sacerdotes* rendered as *leaders*.

It would take too long to discuss his use of the New Testament evidence, and it must suffice to quote one passage where he flies in the face of the overwhelming evidence that the Apostolic Church was hierarchically organized. He boldly asserts that "there is no mention in the New Testament of an essential distinction between 'laity' and 'ministers'" (p. 31). What about Acts 15:20? There we read: "Then it seemed good to the apostles, and the elders, with the whole church . . ." Here, as Gerhardsson has pointed out, we have three groups — the Apostles, the elders, and the faithful.<sup>5</sup> How sharp does a distinction have to be before one can describe it as "essential"?

### **Montanist rigorism reflected**

The letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch are an embarrassment for anyone who shares Schillebeeckx's view of the Christian ministry, for Ignatius distinguishes very clearly between bishop, priests, deacons, and the ordinary faithful. This is an ecclesiastical order which did not appeal to John Calvin, and naturally he rejected the letters as spurious.

During the next three hundred years the authenticity of the letters was debated, with Catholic and Anglican scholars maintaining that the seven letters mentioned by Eusebius (H.E. 3, 36) are genuine, whereas Presbyterian scholars for the most part took the opposite view. In his famous work on Ignatius, published in 1885, J. B. Lightfoot established decisively that the seven letters in the shorter Greek recension are authentic and since that date there has been scholarly consensus on the point.

Now that the genuineness of the letters has been established, all that can be done to minimize the worth of their testimony is to contest the traditional view that they were written about the year 110 and to put them several decades later. It is therefore not surprising to find Schillebeeckx taking this line. There ~~are~~, he tells us "grave historical suspicions about the early dating of the letters of Ignatius"; consequently, he adds, "the monoepiscopacy of the Ignatian writings must be put much later than people hitherto supposed" (pp. 149n, 69).

The "suspicions", to which he refers, are not historical, but simply the reflection of theological prejudice, for it is quite certain that Ignatius suffered martyrdom in the reign of Trajan (98-117). His martyrdom was later embellished with various legends, but the central fact is not really in doubt. In his *Ecclesiastical History* and his *Chronical*, Eusebius puts the martyrdom of Ignatius in the reign of Trajan, and Jerome says it was in the eleventh year of that reign. Some modern historians put the martyrdom some years later, but so many agree that Ignatius suffered under Trajan that we can speak of a consensus on the point.<sup>6</sup>

St. Clement of Rome speaks of bishops and deacons as appointed by the Apōstles, and he distinguishes between *klerikos* and *laikos*, adding that "when we offer our own Eucharist, each one should keep to his own degree."<sup>7</sup> Few will be prepared to accept Schillebeeckx's statement that "this terminology in no way indicates a difference of status between laity and clergy" (p. 70).

He admits that there is only one explicit piece of evidence in the early Church for the view that in case of need a layman could preside at the Eucharist. This is a passage in the *De exhortatione castitatis* of Tertullian. There we read:

in this fashion, but he hopes that "illegality" of this kind will eventually bring about a change in the Church (pp. 77-80, 103). When this change has taken place, priestly ordination will no longer be regarded as a sacrament which imparts an indelible character to the one ordained, but as a rite by which the congregation chooses its president to exercise certain functions for a certain time, so that when he ceases to exercise these functions, he becomes an ordinary member of the congregation (p. 41).

Schillebeeckx seeks to justify his revolutionary conception of the Christian ministry by appealing to the witness of the New Testament and the practice of Christian antiquity, but his scholarship in both fields leaves a lot to be desired.

His tendentious use of these authorities is already evident in the opening sentence of his Introduction, where he writes: "*Ecclesia non est quae habet sacerdotes* wrote the church father Jerome: 'There can be no church community without a leader or team of leaders.' " St. Jerome was not acquainted with the English language, but if he had been, he would surely have been surprised to find *sacerdotes* rendered as *leaders*.

It would take too long to discuss his use of the New Testament evidence, and it must suffice to quote one passage where he flies in the face of the overwhelming evidence that the Apostolic Church was hierarchically organized. He boldly asserts that "there is no mention in the New Testament of an essential distinction between 'laity' and 'ministers'" (p. 31). What about Acts 15:20? There we read: "Then it seemed good to the apostles, and the elders, with the whole church . . ." Here, as Gerhardsson has pointed out, we have three groups — the Apostles, the elders, and the faithful.<sup>5</sup> How sharp does a distinction have to be before one can describe it as "essential"?

### **Montanist rigorism reflected**

The letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch are an embarrassment for anyone who shares Schillebeeckx's view of the Christian ministry, for Ignatius distinguishes very clearly between bishop, priests, deacons, and the ordinary faithful. This is an ecclesiastical order which did not appeal to John Calvin, and naturally he rejected the letters as spurious.



During the next three hundred years the authenticity of the letters was debated, with Catholic and Anglican scholars maintaining that the seven letters mentioned by Eusebius (H.E. 3, 36) are genuine, whereas Presbyterian scholars for the most part took the opposite view. In his famous work on Ignatius, published in 1885, J. B. Lightfoot established decisively that the seven letters in the shorter Greek recension are authentic and since that date there has been scholarly consensus on the point.

Now that the genuineness of the letters has been established, all that can be done to minimize the worth of their testimony is to contest the traditional view that they were written about the year 110 and to put them several decades later. It is therefore not surprising to find Schillebeeckx taking this line. There ~~are~~, he tells us "grave historical suspicions about the early dating of the letters of Ignatius"; consequently, he adds, "the monoepiscopacy of the Ignatian writings must be put much later than people hitherto supposed" (pp. 149n, 69).

The "suspicions", to which he refers, are not historical, but simply the reflection of theological prejudice, for it is quite certain that Ignatius suffered martyrdom in the reign of Trajan (98-117). His martyrdom was later embellished with various legends, but the central fact is not really in doubt. In his *Ecclesiastical History* and his *Chronical*, Eusebius puts the martyrdom of Ignatius in the reign of Trajan, and Jerome says it was in the eleventh year of that reign. Some modern historians put the martyrdom some years later, but so many agree that Ignatius suffered under Trajan that we can speak of a consensus on the point.<sup>6</sup>

St. Clement of Rome speaks of bishops and deacons as appointed by the Apostles, and he distinguishes between *klerikos* and *laikos*, adding that "when we offer our own Eucharist, each one should keep to his own degree." Few will be prepared to accept Schillebeeckx's statement that "this terminology in no way indicates a difference of status between laity and clergy" (p. 70).

He admits that there is only one explicit piece of evidence in the early Church for the view that in case of need a layman could preside at the Eucharist. This is a passage in the *De exhortatione castitatis* of Tertullian. There we read :

alous to invite a female actress to play the title role in *Hamlet*.

A full-scale critique of Schillebeeckx's scriptural and historical arguments would be out of place in the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*. What can be done is to indicate the philosophical and theological presuppositions that underlie his case for a change in the Christian ministry. His philosophy is a form of historicism, a world-view of which Cardinal Siri has traced the development from Vico onwards in his book *Gethsemane*.<sup>13</sup>

Historicism is the view that the course of human history is a self-contained dialectical process in which historical and cultural factors are paramount. So the concepts which men form and which the Church makes use of in defining her dogmas have no trans-historical value but are wholly determined by the cultural milieu.

In theology this leads to the relativizing of all dogmatic definitions. They will be normative only for the milieu in which they are formulated. With the rise of a new cultural milieu, the old definitions become obsolete and new definitions are needed. Living in a new milieu, in which society is committed to the ideal of democracy, it is our Christian duty to scrutinize "the signs of the times", in order to arrive at a formulation of the content to revelation that will be acceptable to the men of today. Hence it is necessary to abandon the old, hierarchical conception of the Church, taking the power of ordaining from the bishop and giving it to the local congregation.

The Roman Catholic Church, in this theology, is not the only true Church, but merely a part of what Schillebeeckx calls "the community of Jesus" (p. 68). Hence he will not allow that developments in the doctrine of the Roman Church are normative for Christians everywhere. Some of her doctrines, and in particular those that concern Church order, he regards as deviations from the teaching of earlier times and his book, echoing Luther's *Babylonian Captivity*, is a plea that she abandon the positions she adopted in pre-Reformation times and return to what he regards as the usages of the ancient Church.

This program supposes that the Roman Catholic Church has not had the guidance of the Holy Spirit in formulating her doctrines and maintaining a Church order which she

claims to have inherited from the Apostles. Tertullian long ago in his *De praescriptione haereticorum* stated in classical fashion the argument which demolishes the claims of the innovators who reject the present teaching of the Church and appeal to Holy Scripture as a warrant for their views. It is the argument from prescription. The Church, because she is the one true Church, founded by Christ and enjoying the assistance of the Holy Spirit, is in possession of the truth. The Scriptures are her Scriptures and those who appeal to the Scriptures in order to contest her teaching, can, like litigants who have been non-suited, be dismissed as having no case. Schillebeeckx in his *Ministry: A Case for Change* has indeed prepared a case for the revolutionary changes which he advocates, but all to no avail, for when a Catholic theologian has grasped the drift of his argument he will have no compunction in declaring that it does not deserve a hearing.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *Ministry: A Case for Change*. By Edward Schillebeeckx. Translated by John Bowden (SCM Press, 26-30 Tottenham Road, London N1 4BZ, 1980) ix + 165, pp. PB. 4.95.
2. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*. Edition 18-20, n. 966.
3. Denzinger, n. 964.
4. Martin Luther, *Selections from his Writings*. Edited by John Dillenberger, Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1961, p. 408.
5. *Memory and Manuscript*, Uppsala, 1961, p. 251.
6. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 3, ch. 22, 36. Jerome, *Interpretatio Chronicae Eusebii Pomphyli*, PL 23, 635. cf. Karl Baus, *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 135-138. Zeiller et Lebreton in *Histoire de l'Eglise* (ed. Fliche et Martin) Vol. 1, pp. 306, 331. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlicher Literatur bis Eusebius*, p. 406. Cited by J. A. T. Robinson *Relating the NT*, p. 313. H. Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity* (Tr. John E. Steely) London 1973, pp. 26, 113. H. Lietzmann, *The Founding of the Church Universal* (Tr. Bertram Lee Woolf) London, 1950, Vol. II, pp. 94, 161, 258. Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums*, Cotta, Stuttgart, 1962, Vol. III, p. 523. All these say "in the reign of Trajan". Schillebeeckx quotes as favouring his view. A. Davids, *Frühkatholizismus*.
7. *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, n. 41. In *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*, Tr. by Maxwell Staniforth, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968, p. 44.
8. *De exhortatione castitatis*, 7, 3. PL 2, 922.
9. Art. "Ordre" in DTC. Vol. XI, 2. Col. 1229-1230.
10. Thus Van Espen in Hefele, *Histoire des Conciles*, Vol. II, p. 787-798.
11. Cf. G. Bornkamm, *Paul*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1975, p. 207.
12. Cf. Kenneth Kirk, "The Ordination of Women" in *Beauty and Bands*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1955, pp. 177-188; E. L. Mascall, *Women Priests? Church Literature Association*, 1972; V. A. Demant, *Why the Christian Priesthood is Male*, Church Literature Association, n.d.; C. S. Lewis, "Priestesses in the Church" in *Undeceptions*, Geoffrey Bles, London, 1977, pp. 191-196; *Man, Woman and Priesthood*. Essays by various authors; Ed. Peter Moore, SPCK, London 1979.
13. *Gethsemane, Reflections on the Contemporary Theological Movement*, Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1981, pp. 150-269. In *Ministry*, historicist statements abound, e.g., p. 75: "Church order as historically conditioned"; p. 77: "historical experience is the criterion for the validity of a particular church order"; p. 83: "the established system is a purely factual dimension"; p. 103: "The 'will of God' is known to us only through the medium of history".

**In this moderately phrased, yet firm and very perceptive article, written within the context of the American scene, the Author stresses the Catholic Church's teaching concerning the real presence of Christ Our Lord in the tabernacle. She examines the replacement of the tabernacle in so many churches today in the United States in relation to this teaching.**

## **The Real Presence of Christ and Placement of the Tabernacle**

**MONICA MIGLIORINO**

**I**N a Jesuit-run parish in Chicago, a controversy erupted three years ago when the pastor announced that the Blessed Sacrament would no longer be reserved in the tabernacle located in the middle of the sanctuary but would now be kept in the church's side chapel. Several parishioners protested this move as they believed it amounted to a demoting of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in their church. To make matters even worse, the pastor had it in mind that once the Blessed Sacrament was moved to the chapel it would not be kept in an obvious place of honor, but placed in a niche located in the rear of the chapel next to a door leading to the sacristy.

The concerned parishioners organized themselves into what came to be known as the Ditch the Niche Campaign. Their efforts at convincing the parish council that this isolated space would not give proper honor to the Blessed Sacrament helped the pastor realize he was going a bit too far. The tabernacle of reservation was finally placed in the middle of the sanctuary in the chapel albeit with the altar moved several feet away. To this day many parishioners remain frustrated that the Blessed Sacrament is no longer kept in the sanctuary of the main church.

The incident described above is by no means an isolated one. Many parishes all over the country in the last 20 years have moved the tabernacle of reservation to a side altar or



chapel. The move is usually part of a renovation package that includes removing statues and taking down the Communion rail. Moving the tabernacle to some less central location is the fruit of a liturgical trend of innovation which believes it is no longer acceptable practice for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in the center of the sanctuary.

### *Suspensions*

What is behind this rush to place the Blessed Sacrament in a less obvious place? Does the move always necessarily represent a devaluation of the Blessed Sacrament? The "professional" liturgists are always swift to assure the faithful that moving the tabernacle out of the sanctuary does not mean it is now relegated to a secondary position.

Many Catholics are suspicious, however, and for good reason, since the trend of moving the tabernacle out of the sanctuary comes at a time when respect, devotion, and even faith among Catholics concerning the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist has seriously declined since Vatican II. After all, the practice of genuflecting before the Blessed Sacrament is less prevalent in recent years. Some priests omit genuflecting at the altar after pronouncing the words of consecration as a sign that the bread and wine are now Christ's Body and Blood. The illicit practice of using bread with yeast (instead of unleavened bread) still remains in certain places. This bread easily breaks into crumbs when given out in Communion and yet I have been to Masses where very little effort is shown by either the priest or faithful to ensure that no crumbs (which are also Christ's Body) fall to the floor and become trampled under foot.

Catechetical instruction of first communicants in many instances has been utterly scandalous in that preparation for receiving the sacrament never includes being taught that Holy Communion is the real Body of Christ. As someone who teaches religion in high school, I am shocked at how many Catholic students believe the consecrated bread merely represents Christ. Until they reached my class, they were simply not taught to believe anything else.

Finally, let us note that Archbishop James Hickey of Washington, D.C., in a recent letter to his priests, encouraged a renewed devotion to the Blessed Sacrament because

a whole generation of young Catholics have grown up never attending a single Benediction or exposition of the Sacrament.

It should be noted that moving the Blessed Sacrament to a less central position has not been a trend initiated by the laity. Rather, it is a movement by and large supported by the clergy, particularly those who consider themselves liturgical experts. A liturgical expert can probably be described as someone who has formally studied the history of liturgical practice and holds a degree from a pastoral institute of a Catholic university in the subject.

### *"A Manner Which Surpasses All The Others"*

Liturgical experts give four basic reasons why the Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a place apart from the sanctuary. All of these reasons have been explained to me by various pastors at one time or another. The first is what we will refer to as the "Equalizing Argument". This rationale probably has its roots in certain conciliar and post-conciliar documents of Vatican II in which reference is made to the different ways Christ is present at Mass. For example, the *Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery* (1967), Article 55 states that Christ is present in the faithful gathered, in the Scripture Readings, in the priest, but "finally under the species of the Eucharist".

There is a tendency nowadays to view these presences of Christ as if they were all equally significant. In other words, the Presence of Christ in the consecrated Bread and Wine is of no greater importance than say His Presence in the assembled congregation. Since the Presence of Christ in the consecrated species has no greater value than anything else, there is no reason the faithful should give the Eucharistic Bread any extra special treatment. Therefore, the tabernacle should be "dethroned", in a manner of speaking, so that the other equally important presences of Christ at Mass can be brought into greater focus.

To state it simply: This argument is false. The various ways Christ is present at Mass are not equal. Paul VI emphatically said as much in his 1965 encyclical *Mystery of Faith*. After examining the various modes of Christ's presence in the Church, the list climaxes with the words:

“But there is yet another manner in which Christ is present in His Church, *a manner which supasses all the others*; it is His Presence in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is for this reason a more consoling source of devotion, a more lovely object of contemplation, a more effective means of santification than all the other sacraments. The reason is clear; *it contains Christ Himself* and it is ‘a kind of perfection of the spiritual life; in a way, it is the goal of all the sacraments’.

“This Presence is called ‘real’—by which it is not intended to exclude all other types of presence as if they were not ‘real’ too, but because it is a Presence *in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a substantial Presence by which Christ, the God-Man, is wholly and entirely present*” (emphasis added).

### *Significant Differences*

The second argument we will call the “Rome Does It So We Can Do It” argument. This argument refers to the fact that at St. Peter’s Basilica, the Blessed Sacrament is not reserved at the main altar but in a side chapel. Many pastors, in an attempt to console their flocks in moving the tabernacle out of the sanctuary, point out that this is the practice at St. Peter’s, and so it obviously has the approval of the Holy Father.

A few things should be noted concerning the practice at St. Peter’s, however. The basilica is visited by thousands of tourists all year who come to savor its art and architecture with no desire at all to spend time in prayer or attend Mass. For this reason it would be inappropriate to place the Blessed Sacrament at the high altar since doing so would actually be a distraction to those who want to pray before the tabernacle. Secondly, the chapel of reservation is located directly off the main body of the church. In other words, it is in an extremely accessible and prominent place. Thirdly, this chapel is where nearly all daily Masses occur at St. Peter’s, so the Blessed Sacrament is in a place frequented by serious worshippers. Finally, it is interesting to note that within this chapel where hundreds of people attend Mass daily, the tabernacle is placed in the middle of the sanctuary space!

The third argument is called the "Active vs. the Static". This perhaps is *the* cornerstone argument of those who believe the Blessed Sacrament should be removed from the sanctuary. This position was enshrined in a document published by the United State Catholic Conference in 1978. The document entitled *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* (EM) was put together by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy. Article 78 states:

"The purpose of this reservation is to bring Communion to the sick and be the object of private devotion . . . A room or chapel specifically designed and separate from the major space is important *so no confusion can take place between the celebration of the Eucharist and reservation. Active and static aspects of the same reality cannot claim the same human attention at the same time*" (emphasis added).

Liturgists are apparently concerned that the presence of the tabernacle in the sanctuary distracts worshippers from participating fully in the action of the Mass, which indeed ought to be absorbing our attention.

The conflict proposed by the active vs. the static elements of the Eucharist is highly exaggerated, however, if indeed it even exists at all. The "problem" ceases to exist by a resolution inherent in the Mass itself. The active aspect of the celebration naturally draws the attention of the faithful away from the Presence of Christ in the tabernacle (assuming it was even there in the first place) toward participation in the Mass. Thus geographical solutions to the "conflict" proposed by EM are unnecessary. After all, even among those who have the greatest reverence for the Blessed Sacrament I know of no one who attends Mass believing this is the time to give private devotion to the reserved species. If the faithful do succumb to being distracted at Mass, working to provide decent homilies would probably be a more effective antidote than anything else.

The final argument has, in this writer's opinion, the most merit. A priest I spoke to once explained to me that during Mass the altar of sacrifice is the liturgical symbol upon which the faithful should focus their attention. The sanctu-



ary space is designed for the purpose of containing this special table. The altar of sacrifice is itself an object of devotion since it is upon the altar that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is made present to us and is where the bread and wine become His own Body and Blood. This is why priests genuflect before the altar and kiss it. Therefore, the sanctuary space should be free from anything that takes attention away from the significance of the altar itself.

This position has historical precedent, since from at least the ninth century down to the latter Middle Ages in Europe Christians came to the church to pray outside Mass time to give devotion to the altar, since Christ descended there when the words of consecration were spoken.

The only drawback to this argument is that it is hardly ever cited by pastors as a reason for removing the tabernacle from the sanctuary space. If catechesis of this sort were implemented whenever tabernacles were placed at side altars, much could be done to re-establish a firm belief among Catholics concerning the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. I believe this rationale is rarely invoked because of the downplaying of the Mass as a sacrifice and the promoting of its meal aspects. When the faithful view the Mass as primarily a meal the altar of sacrifice as an object of devotion loses its significance.

### *An Appropriate Place of Honor*

Now that we have exhausted the major reasons given for moving the Blessed Sacrament to a side altar or chapel, let us look at what the Vatican documents afford us on the topic. The document providing the most guidelines is *Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery*. Article 53 states:

"The place in a church or oratory where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle should be truly prominent. It ought to be suitable for private prayer so that the faithful may easily and fruitfully, by private devotion also, continue to honor the Lord in this sacrament. It is therefore recommended that, as far as possible, the tabernacle be placed in a chapel distinct from the middle or central part of the church, above all in those churches where marriages and funerals take place

frequently, and in places which are much visited for their artistic or historical treasures”.

That it is recommended that the tabernacle be placed in a side chapel may come as a surprise to many. The recommendation is repeated in the 1970 document *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, Article 276. What must be realized is that it is certainly possible for a side chapel to serve as an appropriate place of honor for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. Such a chapel if it is beautiful and special enough can even induce devotion and facilitate adoration.

However, when considering a side chapel, the first sentence of Article 53 should be kept firmly in mind: “The place . . . where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved . . . should be truly prominent”. Thus if the Blessed Sacrament is kept in a side chapel this chapel should be in a prominent place. According to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* the word prominent means: 1) Standing out, or projecting beyond a surface or line. 2a) Readily noticeable: conspicuous; b) widely and popularly known. It is obvious that whatever the word “prominent” means it does not mean *hidden, obscure, remote, isolated, and inaccessible*.

### *Out of Sight and Out of Mind*

There have been instances in which pastors, anxious to implement the directives of the USCC document, find it necessary to, in effect, banish the Blessed Sacrament to some remote and isolated part of the church. One woman complained to me that the Blessed Sacrament in her Midwestern parish is reserved in a former confession!

My own pastor currently has it in mind to remove the tabernacle from the middle of the sanctuary and place it in what was the baptistery. Where is this baptistery? It is very difficult to reach from the main body of the church as one must go through the sacristy to get to it. It is a small (though ornate room) located behind the back wall of the sanctuary. I have been in the parish for two years and I did not know this room was there. To say the least, it is certainly not in a “truly prominent” place. One could even question whether this was a suitable spot for a baptistery even prior to Vatican II. Even *Environmental and Art in*

*Catholic Worship*, Article 79 states that the chapel "space should offer easy access from the porch areas, garden, or street as well as the main space".

It is becoming somewhat more common these days to see the Blessed Sacrament isolated from worshippers via a screen to ensure that it is out of sight and out of mind during Mass. This is that old active vs. static fetish coming into play.

*Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery*, Article 54 goes on to say:

"The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a solid, inviolable tabernacle *in the middle of the main altar*, or on a side altar, *but in a truly prominent place* . . . in individual cases to be decided by the local Ordinary, it may be placed in some other part of the Church which is really worthy and properly equipped.

"Mass may be celebrated facing the people even though there is a tabernacle *on the altar*, *provided this is small yet adequate*" (emphasis added).

Though the Vatican document recommends a side chapel for reservation, if such a chapel is unavailable or unsuitable a number of options can be exercised. It is within the guidelines to have the Blessed Sacrament at one of the side altars. It is even possible (though perhaps not ideal) for the tabernacle to be *on the altar of sacrifice*. Finally, and most importantly, *the Blessed Sacrament could also remain within the middle of the sanctuary* or as the document phrases it "in the middle of the main altar".

### *Flexibility*

Often when pastors in conjunction with "professional" liturgists desire to move the Blessed Sacrament out of the sanctuary parishioners are led to believe that Vatican II guidelines mandate such a move when in truth no such mandate exists. A recommendation is given that the Blessed Sacrament be placed in a side chapel but a recommendation is certainly not a mandate. Should the recommendation be followed? Yes. But this will rest on a number of factors, the most important being that the church has a suitable chapel situation in a "truly prominent" place.



In reality the teachings of Vatican II on the proper placement of the tabernacle represent flexibility in the matter, a flexibility that in no way dictates that the Blessed Sacrament be removed from the center of our sanctuaries. It is interesting to note that the 1980 document *Inaestimabile Donum* reflects this flexibility when it states in Article 24: "The tabernacle in which the Eucharist is kept can be located on an altar, or away from it, in a spot in the church which is very prominent, truly noble and duly decorated, or in a chapel suitable for private prayer and for adoration by the faithful".

Catholics who desire the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in the center of the sanctuary or some other prominent part of the church are motivated by a great devotion to Christ in the Eucharist. They believe with the words of Paul VI that Christ's Presence in the consecrated species "surpasses all the others". It is only natural for Catholics to want the tabernacle where Christ resides to be in an obvious place of honour.

Of course, true devotion to the Eucharist is not accomplished by merely having the tabernacle where it can be seen. This true devotion begins with a proper appreciation for the Mass itself as reverence for the Blessed Sacrament should naturally flow from the Paschal Mystery. The encyclical *Mystery of Faith* aptly quotes St. Augustine on the matter:

"It was in His Flesh that Christ walked among us and it is His Flesh that He has given us to eat for our salvation. *No one, however, eats of this Flesh without having first adored it . . . and not only do we not sin in thus adoring it, but we would sin if we did not do so*" (emphasis added).

Placing the tabernacle in a prominent part of the church is a powerful symbolic statement, a statement expressing publicly that we believe that Christ and Christ alone is the center of our lives and of our Church. It is a sign that His never-ending presence among us is the foundation of our unity. Finally, it expresses that Christ is truly abiding with us until the end of the world.



# Book Review

*Fatal Star*, by Hamish Fraser (in *Hamish Fraser: a Memorial Volume*, The Neumann Press, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347, edited by Geoffrey Lawman, \$14.95).

When Hamish Fraser, "stormy petrel of post-conciliar British Catholicism, died last October, there must have been sighs of relief from many of those whose complacency he had punctured during his almost 40 years of uncompromising advocacy of the "whole faith". I have news for them. Fraser *has not gone away*; he is still with us, thanks to a group of his friends, who have reprinted some of his writings, and thus given a fresh lease of life to his courageous and totally *Catholic* apostolate; one which under earlier and happier pontificates would have earned him a papal knighthood at the very least.

The present *Hamish Fraser Memorial Volume* is centred around his *Fatal Star*, which he published in 1954, just 6 years after his conversion, and which has been so long out of print that most of us were unaware of its very existence. The title is a reference to the five-pointed star commonly used in official insignia in communist countries. It is probably no accident that Fraser chose such an impersonal title (by contrast, for example, to Douglas Hyde's *I Believed* or Kravchenko's *I Chose Freedom*), for although the 1st and 14th chapters contain much autobiographical material illustrating his early adherence to Communism and his later conversion to the Faith (material of considerable interest in itself and for the light it throws on the author's thinking and background and the inner workings of the British Communist Party *apparatus* of the period), the main thrust of the book lies elsewhere — in a clarion call to Catholics to transform the world (including the Communist quarter) through prayer and social action.

As the *Universe* commented at the time, *Fatal Star* is:

"A powerful and expert analysis of the strengths and shortcomings of Communist theory and practice; an amazingly comprehensive and documented analysis of the contemporary political and spiritual crisis of the West; and a vehement and eloquent exposition of the

remedy which lies within the hands of Catholics—if they will only use it—the message of Fatima. Mr. Fraser's thesis is that the conversion of Russia is possible—because Russia is composed of men and women who are living and dying sickened and disillusioned by materialistic Communism. . . .”

And the *Tablet* of the time noted Fraser's

“shrewd analysis . . . particularly (of) the fallacies of the ‘Catholic Left’ and various forms of *progressisme* . . .”

Reading the book 33 years later, one cannot help being struck by its continuing validity in our period of the Rome-Moscow Agreement, endemic syncretism and ‘liberationism’. If only Hamish Fraser's call had been heeded in the 1950s!

Geoffrey Lawman

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### FATHER CLIFTON'S PILGRIMAGES FOR 1988

1. SOUTHERN SPAIN, Cultural and Religious Heritage. Dep. London Easter Sunday evening by Air to Malaga. Thence by coach returning the following Sunday afternoon. £295.00 Half Board. Visits include Granada, Seville, Cordoba, Ronda and Gibraltar. 2 nights each at Granada, Seville and Gibraltar.
2. THREE COUNTRIES TOUR. Dept. London 1st August by Coach for 13 Days. 3 Days each at Verbania on Lake Maggiore, and at Annecy and 4 Days at Traunstein on the Traunsee Lake in Austria. Visits will include Vezelay Cathedral, Shrines to St. Francis de Sales and St. Jeanne Francois de Chantel at Annecy, The Shrine to Our Lady at La Salette. In Italy to see the home of St. Charles Borromeo on the Borromean Islands, plus Milan Cathedral and Last Supper Picture. In Austria to visit Salzburg and the Shrine of Our Lady at Mariazell, plus many other interesting sights and shrines. £395.00 half board.

Full details from Rev. M. Clifton, 30, Park Road, Colliers Wood, London SW19 2HS.